In the Name of Allah,
the All-beneficent, the All-merciful

قال الله تعالى:

﴿إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنكُمُ ٱلرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ ٱلْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا﴾

Indeed Allah desires to repel all impurity from you, O People of the Household, and purify you with a thorough purification.

(*Surat al-Ahzab* 33:33)

Prophetic traditions mentioned in both in Sunni and Shi'ah authoritative reference books of *hadith* and *tafsir* (exegesis of the Qur'an) have confirmed that this holy verse was revealed to exclusively refer to the People of the Cloak [*ahl al- kisa'*], viz. Muhammad, 'Ali, Fatimah, al- Hasan, and al-Husayn ('a) as the *Ahl al- Bayt* (People of the Household). For instance, refer to the following references: *Sunni:* Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d. 241 AH), *al-Musnad*, 1:231; 4:107; 6:292, 304; *Sahih Muslim* (d. 261 AH), 7:130; Al-Tirmidhi (d. 279 AH), *Sunan*, 5:361 et al.; Al- Dulabi (d. 310 AH), *Al-Dhuriyyah al- Tahirah al- Nabawiyyah*, p. 108; Al- Nasa'i (d. 303 AH), *Al-Sunan al- Kubra'*, 5:108; 113; Al- Hakim al- Nayshaburi (d. 405 AH), *Al-Mustadrak 'ala' s- Sahihayn*, 2:416, 3:133, 146- 147; Al- Zarkashi (d. 794 AH), *Al- Burhan*, p. 197; Ibn Hajar al- Asqalani (d. 852 AH), *Fath al- Bari Sharh Sahih al- Bukhari*, 7:104.

Shi'ah: Al- Kulayni (d. 328 AH), *Usul al- Kafi*, 1:287; Ibn Babawayh (d. 329 AH), *Al- Imamah wa' t- Tabsirah*, p. 47, *hadith* 29; Al- Maghribi (d. 363 AH), *Da'a'im al- Islam*, pp. 35, 37; Al- Saduq (d. 381 AH), *Al- Khisal*, pp. 403, 550; Al- Tusi (d. 460 AH), *Al- Amali*, *hadith* 438, 482, 783.

For more details, refer to the exegesis of the holy verse recorded in the following books of *tafsir*: Al- Jassas (d. 370 AH), *Ahkam al- Qur'an*; Al-Wahidi (d. 468 AH), *Asbab al- Nuzul*; Ibn al- Jawzi (d. 597 AH), *Zad al-Masir*; Al- Qurtubi (d. 671 AH), *Al- Jami' Li- Ahkam al- Qur'an*; Ibn Kathir (d. 774 AH), *Tafsir*; Al- Tha'labi (d. 825 AH), *Tafsir*; Al- Tabari (d. 875 AH), *Tafsir*; Al- Suyuti (d. 911 AH), *Al- Durr al- Manthur*; Al- Shawkani (d. 1250 AH), *Fath al- Qadir*; Al- 'Ayyashi (d. 320 AH), *Tafsir*; Al- Qummi (d. 329 AH), *Tafsir*; Furt al- Kufi (d. 352 AH), *Tafsir* at the margin of the exegesis of *Surat al- Nisa'* verse 59; Al- Tabarsi (d. 560 AH), *Majma' al-Bayan*, as well as many other sources.

EPITOMES OF TRUE GUIDANCE (2)
THE MASTER OF THE FAITHFUL;
'ALI IBN ABI-TALIB (AS)

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله:

"إني تاركٌ فيكُمُ الثَقلين:

كتاب الله، وعترتي أهلَ بيتي، ما إن تمسكتُم بهما لن تضلوا أبداً وأَنَّهُما لَن يَفترِقا حتّى يردا عَليَّ الحوضَ"

The Messenger of Allah (s) said: "Verily, I am leaving among you two precious things [thaqalayn]: The Book of Allah and my progeny ['itrati], the members of my Household [Ahl al- Bayt]. If you hold fast to them, you shall never go astray. These two will never separate from each other until they meet me at the Pond [hawḍ] (of Kawthar)."

Some references:

Al-Ḥakim an-Nayshaburi, Al-Mustadrak 'ala's-Sahihayn (Beirut), vol. 3, pp. 109-110, 148, 533

Muslim, As-Sahih, (English translation), book 31, hadiths 5920-3.

At-Tirmidhi, As-Sahih, vol. 5, pp. 621–2, hadiths 3786, 3788; vol. 2, p. 219.

An-Nasa'i, Khasa'is 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭalib, hadith 79.

Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Al-Musnad, vol. 3, pp. 14, 17, 26; vol. 3, pp. 26, 59; vol. 4, p. 371; vol. 5, pp. 181–182, 189-190.

Ibn al-'Athir, Jami' al-Usul, vol. 1, p. 277.

Ibn Kathir, Al-Bidayah wa'n-Nihayah, vol. 5, p. 209.

Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al- Qur'an al- 'Aẓim, vol. 6, p. 199.

Nasir ad-Din al- Albani, Silsilat al- Ahadith as-Sahihah (Kuwait: Ad-Dar as-Salafiyyah), vol. 4, pp. 355-358

EPITOMES OF TRUE GUIDANCE (2)
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PREFACE

In the Name of Allah, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful

The invaluable legacy of the Household [Ahl al-Bayt] of the Prophet (may peace be upon them all), as preserved by their followers, is a comprehensive school of thought that embraces all branches of Islamic knowledge. This school has produced many brilliant scholars who have drawn inspiration from this rich and pure resource. It has provided the Muslim ummah with many scholars whom, following in the footsteps of Imams of the Prophet's Household (‘a), have done their best to clear up the doubts raised by various creeds and currents within and without Muslim society and to answer their questions. Throughout the past centuries, they have given well-reasoned answers and clarifications concerning these questions and doubts.

To meet the responsibilities assigned to it, the Ahl al-Bayt World Assembly (ABWA) has embarked on a defense of the sanctity of the Islamic message and its verities, often obscured by the partisans of various sects and creeds as well as by currents hostile to Islam. The Assembly follows in the footsteps of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) and the disciples of their school of thought in its readiness to confront these challenges and tries to be on the frontline in consonance with the demands of every age.

The arguments contained in the works of the scholars belonging to the School of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) are of unique significance. That is because they are based on genuine scholarship and appeal to reason, and avoid prejudice and bias. These arguments address scholars and thinkers in a manner that appeals to healthy minds and wholesome human nature.

To assist the seekers of truth, the Ahl al-Bayt World Assembly has endeavored to present a new phase of these arguments contained in the studies and translations of the works of contemporary Shi‘ah

writers and those who have embraced this sublime school of thought through divine blessing.

The Assembly is also engaged in editing and publishing valuable works by leading Shi'ah scholars of earlier ages to assist the seekers of the truth in discovering the truths which the School of the Prophet's Household ('a) has offered to the entire world.

The Ahl al-Bayt World Assembly looks forward to benefit from the opinions of the readers and their suggestions and constructive criticism in this area.

We also invite scholars, translators and other institutions to assist us in propagating the genuine Islamic teachings as preached by the Prophet Muhammad (S).

We beseech God, the Most High, to accept our humble efforts and to enable us to enhance them under the auspices of Imam al-Mahdi, His vicegerent on the earth (may Allah expedite his advent).

We express our gratitude to the Assembly's authoring group and the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) Islamic Foundation, London, its translator. We also thank our colleagues who have participated in producing this work, especially the staff of the Translation office. ✍

Cultural Affairs Department
Ahl al-Bayt ('a) World Assembly

INTRODUCTION

In the Name of Allah, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful

All praise belongs to Allah who created everything and bestowed upon all people guidance. May the best of blessings and greetings be upon those whom He chose from among His creatures as guides and standards for His servants, in particular the Seal of Prophets and Doyen of Messengers and Chosen Elite, Abu'l-Qasim al-Mustafa Muhammad (May God's benediction and peace be upon him and his illustrious and purified progeny).

Allah has created man and conferred on him two elements, reason (*'aql*) and free will. Through reason man can recognize the truth and distinguish it from the false-hood and, by means of the free will he can choose the way which he thinks is the best for him and through which he can attain his goal and aim in this world.

Allah made the discerning human intellect a proof for His creatures and nourished it with His opulent source of guidance. He taught man that which he knew not, directed him towards perfection through a course proper and fit for his status, and helped him recognize the purpose of his creation, the achievement of which being the sole reason of bestowing this worldly life on him.

Te Holy Qur'an has elucidated signposts of Divine guidance with its prospects, essential prerequisites and means of reaching it.

The Most High says:

﴿ قُلۡ إِنَّ هُدَى ٱللَّهِ هُوَ ٱلۡهُدَىٰ ﴾

"... Say: Verily, the guidance of Allah, that is the (true) guidance."[1]

---

1. *Surat Al-An'am, 6:71.*

﴿ وَٱللَّهُ يَهۡدِي مَن يَشَآءُ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٖ مُّسۡتَقِيمٖ ﴾

"... For Allah guides whom He will to a path that is straight."[1]

﴿ وَٱللَّهُ يَقُولُ ٱلۡحَقَّ وَهُوَ يَهۡدِي ٱلسَّبِيلَ ﴾

"... But Allah tells (you) the truth, and He shows the (right) way."[2]

﴿ وَمَن يَعۡتَصِم بِٱللَّهِ فَقَدۡ هُدِيَ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٖ مُّسۡتَقِيمٖ ﴾

"... Whoever holds firmly to Allah will be shown that which is straight."[3]

﴿ قُلِ ٱللَّهُ يَهۡدِي لِلۡحَقِّۗ أَفَمَن يَهۡدِيٓ إِلَى ٱلۡحَقِّ أَحَقُّ أَن يُتَّبَعَ أَمَّن لَّا يَهِدِّيٓ إِلَّآ أَن يُهۡدَىٰۖ فَمَا لَكُمۡ كَيۡفَ تَحۡكُمُونَ ﴾

"... Say thou: Allah alone guides towards the Truth. Is then He more worthy to be followed, or he who finds not guidance (himself) unless he is guided? What then is the matter with you? How judge ye?"[4]

﴿ وَيَرَى ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُواْ ٱلۡعِلۡمَ ٱلَّذِيٓ أُنزِلَ إِلَيۡكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ هُوَ ٱلۡحَقَّ وَيَهۡدِيٓ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطِ ٱلۡعَزِيزِ ٱلۡحَمِيدِ ﴾

"And those to whom knowledge has come see that the (Revelation) sent down to thee from thy lord is the truth, and that it guides to the path of the Exalted (in Might), Worthy of all praise."[5]

---

1. *Surat Al-Baqarah, 2:213.*
2. *Surat Al-Ahzab, 33:4.*
3. *Surat Al 'Imran, 3:101.*
4. *Surat Yunus, 10:35.*
5. *Surat Saba', 34:6.*

﴿ وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّنِ ٱتَّبَعَ هَوَىٰهُ بِغَيْرِ هُدًى مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴾

"And who is more astray than one who follows his own lusts, devoid of guidance from Allah?"[1]

Hence, Almighty Allah is the only source of guidance, and His guidance is true guidance. It is He who leads man toward the straight path and the eternal truth.

These facts are confirmed and realized by scholars and men of knowledge who completely follow and submit to them with total submission.

Man's intrinsic nature is blessed with the longing to attain perfection together with the capability to recognize and discover the way to perfection. Hence Allah the Exalted said:

﴿وَمَا خَلَقْتُ ٱلْجِنَّ وَٱلْإِنسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴾

"I have created the jinn and mankind only that they may serve me."[2]

Real servitude and devotion cannot be realized if devoid of knowledge, so knowledge and devotion constitute an exclusive way of achieving an aim, an aim and an end leading to the apex of maturity.

Allah has provided man with two forces, anger and lust, to make headway toward perfection. However, man has to guard himself from being overwhelmed or driven by anger and lust for self-pleasure (*hawa*) which also originates from them. Man, therefore, besides his reason and all other means of intelligence and knowledge, needs someone who can provide him with the right perception and sound vision to fulfill the purpose of his creation and, enable him to select the path leading to goodness and bliss and avoid the path of vice and misery.

---

1. *Surat Al-Qisas, 28:50.*
2. *Surat Adh-Dhariyat, 51:56.*

Since creation, prophets and their trustworthy successors (*awsiya'*) have been bearers of the torch of Divine guidance that leads man towards the right path. The Creator, within the system of creation, has not withheld anything that may be needed for any being to advance and attain a fitting degree of perfection. And, as manifested by the revealed texts, the Omnipotent God has never been indifferent towards His servants, nor abandoned them to their own devices, nor ignored them without providing a responsible guiding supervisor, a teacher and illuminating light. Hence human reason can never accept that the earth, where our existence unfolds, can be devoid of the presence of an authority (*hujjah*) from God, responsible for His creatures, so that no excuse should remain for human beings against God. The divine trust has been there before creation, accompanied all mankind and will remain after mankind has departed from this earth; in fact, if there were not more than two men on the earth one of them would surely be God's trust (*Imam*) over people. In an indisputable way, the Holy Qur'an expressively says:

﴿ إِنَّمَآ أَنتَ مُنذِرٌ ۖ وَلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هَادٍ ﴾

"... Thou art a warner only, and for every man a guide."[1]

Allah chose messengers and provided them with divine revelation to undertake the responsibility of guiding mankind by providing them with the necessary required directions and instructions needed in all walks of life. Following is a brief summary of how the mission of guiding humanity was processed by Almighty Allah:

1. Receive the revelation (*wahy*) and have full knowledge of the Divine Message. This stage required perfect readiness to receive and perceive the Message. The reason why God selected His apostles is clearly expressed by the Holy Qur'an:

﴿ ٱللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ حَيْثُ يَجْعَلُ رِسَالَتَهُۥ ﴾

"Allah knoweth best with whom to place His Message."[2]

---

1. *Surat Ar-Ra'd, 13:7.*
2. *Surat Al-An'am, 6:124.*

And,

﴿ وَلَـٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَجۡتَبِي مِن رُّسُلِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُ ﴾

"But Allah chooseth of His messengers whom He will ..."[1]

2. Propagate and convey the Divine Message to whom they (prophets) were sent. The fulfilment of such commitment was without doubt dependent on the possession of great spiritual capacities and full competence besides immunity and infallibility (‘*ismah*) against both erring and perversion. Almighty Allah says:

﴿ كَانَ ٱلنَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً فَبَعَثَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ وَأَنزَلَ مَعَهُمُ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ بِٱلۡحَقِّ لِيَحۡكُمَ بَيۡنَ ٱلنَّاسِ فِيمَا ٱخۡتَلَفُواْ فِيهِ ﴾

"Men were one community. God sent messengers to give glad tidings to the good and warn the bad. He sent the book in truth so they might judge justly in their disputes ..."[2]

3. Formulate and establish a community fully believing in the Divine Message. Prepare it (*ummah*) in such a way that it becomes capable of supporting and aiding the guiding leadership in its endeavor to achieve its objects and goals and practically apply the divine laws in life. The Holy Qur’an says:

﴿ وَيُزَكِّيهِمۡ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ وَٱلۡحِكۡمَةَ ﴾

"(He might) purify them from the filth of ignorance and evil characteristics and teach them the Law contained in His book."[3]

Purification (*tazkiyah*) means to train and teach man all the principles that lead him towards true perfection, both by means of moral guidance and legislative guidance. This mission requires an ideal, possessing all the elements and components of perfection as mentioned by Allah the Exalted:

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1. *Surat Al ‘Imran, 3:179.*
2. *Surat Al-Baqarah, 2:213.*
3. *Surat Al-Jumu‘ah, 62:2.*

﴿ لَّقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ ٱللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَٱلْيَوْمَ ٱلْأَخِرَ وَذَكَرَ ٱللَّهَ كَثِيرًا ﴾

"Verily in the messenger of Allah ye have a good example for him that looks unto Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah much."[1]

4. Safeguard and protect the Message against any deviance, perversion and falsification in the course and period determined for propagation of the Message. This also needs one who is competent and fully aware of the innate nature of man and his spiritual needs, an ability which is termed 'infallibility' (*'ismah*).

5. Cure and nurture the human spirit in such a way that it is morally and spiritually elevated. Endeavour to set aright and stabilize the pillars and cornerstones of human communities through real fulfilment of the Lord's Message and effective application of the divine laws and rules by establishing a political government capable of administering and running the *ummah*'s affairs according to the Divine Message. In order to fulfill this mission there needs to be a supervisor with certain characteristics like wisdom, bravery, extreme firmness and an awareness of the individual and social needs of people, of the global intellectual, political and social movements, of administration and training, of laws and rules which can only be found in a Divinely-inspired individual. Besides all these qualities stands infallibility which designates the spiritual competence that safeguards the religious authority against any perverted or improper act, any act that may have a negative effect on his mission or his subjects' submission to his orders and thus contradict the goals and objects of the Message.

In order to fulfill the mission entrusted to them by God and realize the aims of the Divine Message, prophets and their chosen successors chose the most perilous paths in order to guide man, put up with all kinds of difficulties and gave up all that every man devoted to his principle and creed can sacrifice, never retreating or hesitating in conveying God's Message to mankind.

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1. *Surat Al-Ahzab, 33:21.*

The prophets' hard toil and perpetual struggle along past ages were crowned by God's sending the Seal of Prophets, Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah (*s*) and entrusting him with the huge responsibility of guiding men at all levels, commanding him to accomplish the objects and goals of the Message. On this rugged road, the Holy Messenger (*s*) took marvelous steps to establish the Divine Message in the shortest time.

The output of the Prophet's two-decade-long day and night struggle was as follows:

1. Introducing a full-fledged message to humanity containing all components of continuity and survival.

2. Providing the *ummah* with all the factors and means sufficient to protect human beings from all forms of deviation.

3. Creating and forming a Muslim community having faith in Islam as a principle, in the Prophet as a leader, and in the Islamic Law (*Shari'ah*) as a code of life.

4. Establishing an Islamic state and political body that raised the banner of Islam and applied the celestial *Shari'ah*.

5. Presenting an illumined and brilliant portrait for the wise Lord-inspired leadership through his (*s*) own leadership.

For realizing all the Message goals completely, it was necessary that:

A. The competent leader should keep on implementing and applying the Message while protecting it against the stratagems hatched by evil-doers lying in wait for it.

B. A proper and healthy educational process continue as long as the generations are there, and conducted by a scientifically and psychologically competent trainer, who could be a good example and model in morals and behavior, like the Messenger of Allah (God's peace and benediction be upon him and his progeny), and, fully comprehend the Message and exemplify it by his eloquence and moments of silence.

It was the Divine will that committed the Messenger (*s*) with the charge of preparing the elite from among his Household, declaring their names and their roles on earth, which were confined to

undertaking the duties and functions entrusted to the great prophetic movement. The aim of all this has been to safeguard the Divine Message for which Allah ordained immortality and immunity against the perversion of illiteracy and the cunning of treachery, besides training people of all generations and teaching them the values and concepts of the blessed *Shari'ah*, the manifestation of whose realms and uncovering of whose secrets and hidden treasures were undertaken by the prophets in the long course of time, till God resurrects the earth and all the creatures found on it.

This Divinely devised all-inclusive planning was well-revealed in the *hadith* quoted from the Prophet (*s*): "Verily, I am leaving behind two precious things (*thaqalayn*) among you, if you hold on to them you will never go astray: The Book of Allah and my kindred (*'itrah*), for indeed, the two will never separate until they meet me at the pond (of *al-Kawthar* on the Day of Judgment)".

The Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (God's peace and benedictions be upon them all) were truly the best among those introduced by the Holy Prophet (*s*) as his successors in leading the *ummah* as commanded by Almighty Allah.

The lives of the Twelve Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (God's peace be upon them) reveal the actual course of Islam in the post-Prophet (*s*) era. Making a comprehensive and all-inclusive analysis of their biographies will certainly help up us have a fair idea of the genuine Islam which started penetrating men's hearts after their passionate energy began to dwindle after the demise of the Prophet (*s*). In that period the Infallible Imams undertook the mission of liberating human from the bondage of illusion, and provoking men's religious zeal towards increasing their awareness of the *Shari'ah* and the Messenger's movement and blessed revolution and not deviating from the universal laws and precepts (*sunnah)* which govern and control the conduct of the leader and *ummah* as a whole.

The Guided Imam's life found its real existence in following with perseverance the simple principles laid down by the Messenger of Allah (*s*), by interacting with the believers who guided their lives according to his teachings. After him the Imams (*'a*) were the true leaders for the *ummah*, the firm ones in God's command, the perfect

lovers of God, and foremost in achieving the apex of aspired human perfection.

The Imams (*'a*) exerted strenuous efforts and endured severe torment in the way of God's obedience, sustaining various kinds of alienation by rude estrangers yet presenting the most sublime examples of steadfastness and firmness in implementing God's rules. They preferred martyrdom with dignity over life with humiliation and abasement, the path which led them towards a meeting with the Glorified Allah, after hard strife and long struggle.

It is not possible for historians or writers to have full knowledge of all the dimensions and aspects of their bountiful lives or claim having studied and learned all about them. This attempt of ours is just meant to give bright glimpses of the Imams' lives, behavior and principles which historians have written about, and we managed to discover through reviewing sources of study and research much more, imploring Allah to make it of benefit and use for all people. Surely, He is the Guardian of all success.

Our study of the Divine mission starts with the Messenger of Islam and Seal of Prophets, Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah (God's peace and benediction be upon him and his progeny), and ends with the Seal of Successors (*awsiya'*), Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-'Askari al-Mahdi the Awaited, (may God the Exalted hasten his reappearance and illuminate the earth with his justice).

This book is allocated to the biography and life of the Chosen Messenger, Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah (*s*), who practiced Islam in all its dimensions: The personal and social in critical and political circumstances. In the course of time and in such hard conditions, he (*s*) managed to lay the foundations of Islamic values within thought, belief, ethics and conduct, turning into a beacon of light for all times and all human beings by spreading rays of faith, purity and brilliance.

We would like to express our gratitude to all our dear brothers who exerted abundant efforts and contributed to complete this splendid blessed project, particularly the Compilation Board under the supervision of *Sayyid Mundhir al-Hakim*, may Allah the Almighty preserve his life.

We feel obliged to Allah the Exalted, extending our hands to Him in prayer with gratitude for helping us in completing this blessed encyclopedia. He is truly sufficient for us and the best Helper.

Cultural Affairs Department
The Ahl al-Bayt (as) World Assembly

SECTION ONE

It Consists Of Three Chapters:

Chapter One
A Few Lines About Imam 'Ali Ibn Abi-Talib

Chapter Two
Views About Imam 'Ali's Character

Chapter Three
Some Aspects Of Imam 'Ali's (as)
Personality

CHAPTER ONE
A FEW LINES ABOUT IMAM 'ALI IBN ABI-TALIB

The First of the Guiding Successors

The well-pleased Imam, 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib, is the commander of the faithful believers, the chief of the prophets' successors, and the first of the guiding successors to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sawas), by the command of Allah the Almighty and the decree of the Holy Prophet.[1] The Holy Qur'an has openly declared Imam 'Ali's inerrancy and purification from all filth.[2] The Holy Prophet took Imam 'Ali, his wife, and his two sons as partners in his famous mutual invocation of God's curse on the lying party (*mubahalah*) against the Christians of Najran. He also declared these persons to be the Near Relatives (*qurba*), the love for whom was decided by the Almighty as obligatory upon all Muslims.[3] On more than one occasion, the Holy Prophet introduced these persons as the matches of the Glorious Qur'an, declaring that redemption should be only for those who hold fast to these two[4,] while perdition isthe result for those failing to adhere to them.[5]

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1. Refer to the Holy Qur'an, *Surat al-Maidah 5:3&67* and the Holy Prophet's saying on Ghadir Day, 'Whoever has considered me as his master, must consider 'Ali as his master.' See **al-Saffar, Basa'ir al-Darajat**, pp. 97; al-Kulayni, **al-Kafi** 1:286; Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal 4:281; **Sunan Ibn Majah** 1:45/hadith 121. About this Prophetic tradition (hadith), many books and encyclopaedias have been written. See, for example, Sheikh 'Abd al-Husayn al-Amini, **al-Ghadir Encyclopedia**, and the saying of the prophet Mohammad (sawas) in the Ghadir day:"For whom I am his leader then Ali (as) is his leader.

2. *Surat Al-Ahzab, 33:33.*

3. *Surat Al-Imran, 3:61.*

4. *Surat Al-Shura, 42:23.*

5. Al-Saffar, **Basa'ir al-Darajat**, pp. 433/hadith 3 where the Holy Prophet is reported to have said, "I am leaving amongst you the two weighty things; the Book of Allah and the members of my Household." See also Sheikh al-

Exceptional Upbringing

From his earliest youth, Imam 'Ali was brought up in the lap of the Holy Prophet (sawas). He was thus nourished withhis most genuine and purest of morals; and so Imam 'Ali (as) proved himself to be the most loyal to his educator and his immaculate brother. He was thus the first to believe in the Holy Prophet's message, the first to perform the ritual prayer, and the most honest of all of those who dedicated themselves wholly to their Lord. He sacrificed everything for the sake of bringing to prosperity the message of the Holy Prophet, in the most crucial moments of his clash against ignorant polytheism in all of its forms and in both stages of Makkah (i.e. before migration) and in al-Madinah (i.e. after migration) as well as during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet and after that. Thus, Imam 'Ali (as) defended his principles, doctrine, and values uncompromisingly, representing the truth in all its branches, without surpassing them for a single inch, nor deviating.

The Voice of Divine Justice

Describing Imam 'Ali according to the request of Mu'awiyah ibn Abi-Sufyan, Dirar ibn Damarah al-Kinani said:

"'Ali was sharp-sighted, prudent, powerful, and strong in the way of Allah. What he said was a criterion to distinguish between what was just and unjust. His judgments were fair. He was abounding in knowledge. Wisdom was evident in all dimensions of his character. His intuition satiated those who had a thirst for it. He feared the ornaments of the world. He was devoted to nocturnal supplications. Pondering over the tumultuous future made him cry ceaselessly. Wearing coarse garment was pleasure for him. He loved plain food. He was not pretentious but was like one of us. If we had any question, we would pose it to him and he would immediately answer it. If we asked for any help, he would

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Saduq, **'Uyun Akhbar al-Rida** 2:60/hadith 25; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 2:226/hadith 3; **Sunan al-Tirmidhi** 5:327-8/hadith 3874; al-Nasa'i, **al-Sunan al-Kubra** 5:45/hadith 8148. Moreover, the same Prophetic tradition has been mentioned in many Sunni and Shi'ite reference books of traditions, yet with differences in text.

immediately help us. Although he was very intimate, he was so awe-inspiring that we would never dare to say anything in vain. He was so dignified that we would never open our eyes on his face. He honoured the people of religion and pleased the poor by fondling them. No man of authority dared to misuse his power in his presence so as to get his approval for the unjust act he had done. No common person was made disappointed by his justice, thinking that since he had no power, he would be deprived of his justice."[1]

These touching words made Mu'awiyah, as well as all of the attendants, weep so deeply and invoke God's mercy on Imam 'Ali (as).

The Outstanding Role in the History of the Islamic Message

Ever since the first spark of propagation for Islam, Imam 'Ali (as) supported the Holy Prophet (sawas) and offered such great sacrifices with him that no other companion of the Prophet (sawas) could ever match him along the history of the propagation for Islam. Imam 'Ali (as) never stopped defending Islam and supporting the Holy Prophet (sawas) "*until the murky night of polytheism flashed up, the truth evinced its purest side, the chief of the religion spoke his words, and the tongue of the devils were muted after he had to face the ferocious Arabs and the mutinous Scripturists.*"[2]

After the Holy Prophet (sawas) had made remarkable steps and significant progress towards changing the ignorant community into a rational one in a short period of time, Islam had to walk a very long and rugged road in order to attain the final destination and achieve its major goals. Thus, in order to achieve these goals successfully, it was necessary to draw a faultless plan and choose

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1. Sulayman al-Kufi, **Manaqib al-Imam Amir al-Mu'minin**, pp. 51/hadith 540; al-Qadi al-Maghribi, **Sharh al-Akhbar** 2:391-2/hadith 743; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 33:275/hadith 538; Ibn 'Asakir, **Tarikh Madinat Dimashq** 24:401; al-Salihi al-Shami, **Subul al-Huda wa'l-Rashad** 11:30.
2. These phrases are quoted from Lady Fatimah al-Zahra''s famous speech that she delivered in the presence of Abu-Bakr, 'Umar, and the other Muslims a few days after the passing away of the Holy Prophet (sawas) when these persons confiscated the right of Imam 'Ali to the leadership of the Muslim community.

such an extraordinary leader whose observation, faith, perfection, sincerity, knowledge-ability and experience would not be less than the Holy Prophet's. Therefore, it was natural for the leading Prophet to plan very meticulously for the future of the community and for the future of the propagation of Islam, which was the essence of the calling of all of the prophets throughout history and the recipient of their continuous efforts and struggle. Accordingly, the last Prophet (sawas), by the command of the Almighty, chose to complete this task, the one who believed that he lived only for defending the existence of Islam, because this task required one who would sacrifice himself for achieving the goals of the Holy Prophet's message, one who was perfectly pure from all stains and defects of the pre-Islamic era, and who was characterized by the highest ranks of competence. Now, except for 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib, who else could have these qualities and medals of honour?

The Prophet's Preparation of His Successor

'Ali ibn Abi-Talib, and none else, was the successor and the heir, whom the Holy Prophet (sawas) had prepared in a special way, for one reason; to continue conveying God's message after the passing away of the Holy Prophet. So, the Holy Prophet (sawas) designated Imam 'Ali (as) as the supreme intellectual and political authority of the Muslims after him, so that the Imam would continue the time-consuming and pioneering process of change with the help of the vigilant masses from the *Muhajirun* (the emigrants; earliest Muslims who fled their homeland, Makkah, to Yathrib) and the *Ansar* (the supporters; the believers of Yathrib who believed in and supported the Holy Prophet)whom the Holy Prophet (sawas) had also prepared for this purpose.

Political Apostasy

Unfortunately, the ignorance rooted in the depths of that society could not be easily defeated through bloody conflicts like the battles of Badr andHunayn. The uprooting of such ignorance could not be achieved within a single decade of fighting and struggle; therefore, it was natural that it would reappear, concealing itself under the pennon of Islam, so it could emerge on the social theatre

even though the reappearance took many decades. Once again, it was natural that this ignorance would slip into the primary positions. Because of this, backsliding towards pre-Islamic concepts and traditions occurred, of which was predicted by every person possessing the least bit of political and social consciousness. The Messenger of Allah and the seal of His prophets must have known about such apostasy and he must have predicted that the chiefs of apostasy would most certainly try to eliminate the divinely appointed leader of the Muslim community, considering that the community was in its early stage of development, and danger encompassed them from all angles. Moreover, the masses were not yet experienced in perception and maturity, and had a limited development in the reception of all of the aspects of the divine message.

The Prophetic Planning

Because the message of Islam mainly aimed at changing the reality and understanding of the ignorant community into a conscious one, it was inevitable that those responsible for carrying out the goals of the message would take into consideration all of the surrounding conditions and sediments of that community, devising for an overall change at both near and remote levels. In fact, this was exactly what the Islamic message did. The Islamic message succeeded to develop following the institutions that control the history of mankind. This success was practically manifested through selecting guided leaders and infallible Imams, declaring them as divinely chosen leaders, authorizing them to make decisions in all intellectual and political affairs. Thus, in the tenth year after his migration to al-Madinah, the Holy Prophet (sawas) designated the first leader, i.e. Imam ‘Ali (as) to the position of next leadership of the Muslim community. Having accomplished all the rites of his final ritual pilgrimage (*Hajj*), the Holy Prophet declared Imam ‘Ali (as) as his heir and successor. Moreover, he brought this command to accomplishment when he ordered all the

attendants to pay allegiance to Imam 'Ali (as) as their next leader and imam. This took place at a place called Ghadir Khumm.[1]

Reality and Ambition

Unfortunately, the planning for the endurance of Islam collided with a reality, which was predictable for the Holy Prophet (sawas). This reality was the trend of some men who belonged to the tribe of Quraysh. These men made use of the lack of consciousness that was common to the community, whose individuals were expected to protect the divinely appointed orthodox leadership. Thus, the majority of Muslims did not realize that the pre-Islamic ignorance not only resurfaced but took the form of planned and plotted conspiracies from behind the curtains against these Muslims, and a fresh Islamic revolution arose; it was not the matter of replacing a leader with another; rather, the most important case was the replacement of the Holy Prophet's revolutionary line of Islam with another ignorant-based one. This occurred despite the call for the motto of Islam. This version of Islam was saturated with incorrect values, false traditions and it rejected the customs of the pre-Islamic ignorance-era.

Aborting the Pioneering Planning

In this way, the storm of the *Saqifah*[2] aborted the pioneering plan of the Holy Prophet (sawas) as soon as his person disappeared from the scene. Thus, the prophecy of the Holy Qur'an came true:

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1. See the Holy Qur'an, *Surah al-Ma'idah 67&3*. This holy verse reveals the divine command of designating the next leadership of the Muslim community the person whose leadership would complete the divine message and who would fulfill the divine mission so that the sealing divine religion would be flawlessly perfect. Through the leadership of this divinely chosen person, God's grace of guidance that He conferred upon humanity would be perfect in all of its ranks and thus the all-comprehensive and perfect religion of Islam would be the everlasting religion approved for all human beings.
2. Refer to Sheikh al-Mufid**, al-Ikhtisas**, pp. 185; Event of Banu-Sa'idah's Shed; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 28:18-182; Musnad Ahmad ibn-Hanbal 1:55-6; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 2:21.

﴿وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِهِ ٱلرُّسُلُ ۚ أَفَإِيْن مَّاتَ أَوْ قُتِلَ ٱنقَلَبْتُمْ عَلَىٰٓ أَعْقَـٰبِكُمْ﴾

"Muhammad is but a messenger, messengers (the like of whom) have passed away before him. Will it be that, when he dies or is slain, ye will turn back on your heels?"[1]

This conspiracy took place after the Holy Prophet (sawas) had designated ‘Ali ibn Abi-Talib (as) as the trustee of his divine message, the educator of his nation, and the leader of his state. He had also assigned to him the duty of protecting the divine message and law in the same way as he had commanded him to teach the new Muslims and defend the Muslim state whose roots had not yet been firmly established and was still too young to challenge any storm that would uproot it.

Principle-Based Attempts

Using all possible methods, Imam ‘Ali (as) tried to return the situation back to normal by legally rejecting the resolutions and results of the incurable Saqifah conference, refraining from paying homage to the unqualified leader, and confronting the secretly plotted conspiracies. However, all of the Imam’s efforts were of no avail, because there were no more than two bitter options to take. Either he could cause the Islamic state to collapse entirely, or help to maintain it through yielding to the fact that incompetent persons would be the leaders, while, at the same time and in the long run, attempting to correct the mistakes and avoid more faults.

Preferring the More Important to the Important

Imam ‘Ali ibn Abi-Talib’s attitude of the entire changeover was so courageous that history immortalized it throughout the ages. Expressing his attitude, Imam ‘Ali (as) said:

"I therefore withheld my hand until I saw that many people were reverting from Islam and trying to destroy the religion of

1. *Surat Al-Imran, 3:144.*

Muhammad (sawas). I then feared that if I did not protect Islam and its people and there occurred in it a breach or destruction, it would mean a greater blow to me than the loss of power over you which was, in any case, to last for a few days of which everything would pass away as the mirage passes away, or as the cloud scuds away. Therefore, in these happenings I rose until wrong was destroyed and disappeared, and religion attained peace and safety."[1]

Principled Attitudes of Imam 'Ali (as)

For a period of twenty-five years of ordeal, Imam 'Ali had to swallow his patience, which was even bitterer than *colocynth*, as he himself expressed, for no other reason than to maintain the unity of the Muslim nation and avoid any fragmentation that would afflict the fresh state of the Holy Prophet (sawas). In order to achieve these goals, he had to refrain from constantly demanding his rights, yet temporarily, while giving advice to the rulers whenever they needed. In the meantime, he occupied himself with compiling and explaining the Qur'anic verses after he had recorded the Holy Qur'an entirely. He also dedicated his efforts to educating the community on the concepts of the Holy Qur'an, enlightening the masses on the Qur'anic facts, and unmasking the conspiracy to which many sects of Muslims had submitted. Besides, Imam 'Ali (as), during this period, concerned himself with correcting the mistakes in understanding and applying the Islamic laws that were often committed by the authorities. He also worked on creating a righteous group that believed in the Prophet's plan for an Islamic supreme leadership. This group embarked on spreading and propagating the true religion, sacrificing everything for the sake of establishing the practice of Islamic laws and teachings.

Fruits of Patience and Principled Exertions

As a result of twenty-five years of patience and great effort, Imam 'Ali (as) was able harvest the fruits of his toil. Thus, many

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1. **Nahj al-Balaghah** 3:119, Epistle No. 62: an epistle of Imam 'Ali to the people of Egypt sent with Malik al-Ashtar; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 33:596-7/hadith 743; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 17:151.

curtained facts were revealed and the first two generations of Muslims came to know that Imam ‘Ali (as) was the worthiest of the position of leadership, to which he was designated by Allah the Almighty and His Prophet. He alone had the capability to put right what had been corrupted, although circumstances were complicated, hearts were confused, and many were straying off the straight path. Expressing these situations, Imam ‘Ali (as) once said:

"By Allah, I had no liking for the caliphate, nor did I have any interest in government, but you yourselves invited me to it and prepared me for it."[1]

The Most Proper Method of Reformation

Declaring the policy he would follow in reformation, Imam ‘Ali (as) said:

"You should know that if I respond to you I would lead you as I know and would not care about whatever one may say or abuse."[2]

On another occasion, he declared:

"O Allah! You know what we did was neither to seek power nor to acquire anything from the vanities of the world. We rather wanted to restore the signs of Your religion and to usher prosperity into Your cities so that the oppressed among Your creatures might be safe and Your forsaken commands might be established."[3]

All-Inclusive Justice

Imam ‘Ali (as) exerted all efforts to establish social and political justice among his subjects, thus choosing, for the establishment of justice, a straight path so that security, freedom, and luxury would abound in the society and stability would be achieved along with

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1. **Nahj al-Balaghah**, Sermon No. 205; Sheikh al-Tusi, **al-Amali**, pp. 732/hadith 1530; Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 11:7, Sermon No. 198.
2. **Nahj al-Balaghah** 1:181-182/sermon 92, **Sharih Nahj al-Balaghah** for ibn Hadid 7:33 sermon no.91.
3. **Nahj al-Balaghah** 1:13/sermon 131, **Tuhaf Al-'aqul** p.239, **Sharih Nahj al-Balaghah** for ibn Hadid 8:263/sermon no.131.

maintaining its unity. Imam ‘Ali (as), also worked hard educating, teaching, and giving his subjects their rights completely, thus dismissing corrupt administrators, replacing them with officials and deputy governors who were well known for their virtue and rectitude; imposing strict supervision over these officials. He thus eliminated, from positions of leadership, all the opportunists and timeservers who misused their offices for the achievement of personal interests. Meanwhile, Imam ‘Ali (as) committed to honesty, truth, and sincerity in all fields of life; he never cheated and never quibbled; rather, he patterned after the course of his brother and cousin; namely, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sawas).

Struggle until Winning Martyrdom

Because of these reformative steps of Imam ‘Ali (as), the greedy and opportunistic powers, upon losing their political, social, and economical positions, began turning against the Imam in order to expel him and regain their positions of authority, lost following the implementation of the policy of establishing an all-inclusive justice, which was assiduously followed by Imam ‘Ali (as). Thus, the parties, who had participated in the deposing ‘Uthman ibn ‘Affan and the instigation of the masses against him, started supporting one another against Imam ‘Ali (as), raising the slogan, which demanded vengeance for the shedding of the blood of ‘Uthman! They thus began to denounce the wise and honest political program of the Imam. A group of them (namely, the instigators of the Battle of the Camel) breached the homage they had paid to the Imam. Another group (namely, Mu’awiyah ibn Abi-Sufyan and his followers) deviated from the truth, and a third group (namely, the Khawarij) apostatized their faith. After a long and bitter struggle against these groups, Imam ‘Ali (as) was martyred in his place of prayer, which was stained with his blood, located in al-Kufah Mosque, at the Grand Night (*laylat al-qadr*) in the year 40 AH. Imam ‘Ali (as) won martyrdom and steadfastness on the principles of the divine message and on truth, while harvesting the fruits of his ceaseless struggle for the sake of establishing the foundations of Islam.

Peace be upon you, O commander of the faithful believers and leader of the white-forehead and marked people of Paradise the

day you were born, the day you were reared by the Holy Prophet, the day you fought for the sake of raising high the standard of Islam, the day you acted patiently and sincerely, the day allegiance were pledged to you, the day you ruled, the day you unmasked the claws of ignorance that covered themselves with the cover of Islam, the day you were martyred, watering the high tree of Islam with your pure blood, and the day you shall be raised to life, decorated with the medal of winning the highest place of Paradise.

CHAPTER TWO
VIEWS ABOUT IMAM 'ALI'S CHARACTER

Imam 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib (as) lived with the movement of Divine Revelation from the beginning, up until to the cessation of the Revelation by the passing away of the Holy Prophet (sawas). During this period, Imam 'Ali (as) had such distinctive and honourable status that everybody aspired towards. For twenty-three years, Imam 'Ali (as) defied death for the sake of defending the Holy Prophet (sawas) and the principles of Islam. These achievements and virtues are reflected in innumerable Qur'anic verses and Prophetic sayings. In this regard, 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas says:

"Three hundred Qur'anic verses were revealed in praise of Imam 'Ali (as)[1] He was always the chief and the most honourable of all those to whom the Qur'anic verses that began with 'O ye who believe' referred. In some of these Qur'anic verses, Allah blamed the companions of Muhammad (sawas), but He never mentioned 'Ali reproachfully; rather, 'Ali was always mentioned praiseworthily in the Qur'an."[2]

Due to the large number of Qur'anic verses that were revealed in praise of Imam 'Ali (as), a number of old and modern men of letters compiled many books in which they listed these verses. Let us now refer to some of these verses that scholars of Qur'anic exegesis and Prophetic traditions unanimously declared to have been revealed in praise of Imam 'Ali (as).

1. 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas is reported to have said: 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib only possessed four dirham (i.e. silver coin of that time). He gave one as alms at night, the other in the day, the third secretly,

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1. Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, **Tarikh Baghdad** 6:219; Ibn 'Asakir, **Tarikh Madinat Dimashq** 42:364, No. 4933; Ibn Hajar, **al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah**, S. 9, Ch. 3, pp. 127.
2. **Tafsir al-'Ayashi** 2:352; **Tafsir Furat al-Kufi**, pp. 50/hadith 9; al-Hasakani, **Shawahid al-Tanzil**, pp. 30/hadith 13 & pp. 68/hadith 77.

and the fourth openly. Appreciating this situation, this holy verse was revealed:

﴿ٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمۡوَٰلَهُم بِٱلَّيۡلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ سِرّٗا وَعَلَانِيَةٗ فَلَهُمۡ أَجۡرُهُمۡ عِندَ رَبِّهِمۡ وَلَا خَوۡفٌ عَلَيۡهِمۡ وَلَا هُمۡ يَحۡزَنُونَ﴾

"As for those who spend their property by night and by day, secretly and openly, they shall have their reward from their Lord and they shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve."[1]

2. Ibn ‘Abbas also reported: ‘Ali gave his ring as alms while he was in the state of genuflection of a prayer. The Holy Prophet (sawas) asked the beggar as to who gave him the ring, and the beggar reported it was ‘Ali who was still in prayer. Immediately, Allah the Almighty revealed this holy verse:

﴿إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُۥ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱلَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَيُؤۡتُونَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَهُمۡ رَٰكِعُونَ﴾

"Only Allah is your Guardian and His Messenger and those who believe, those who keep up prayers and give alms while they bow."[2]

3. Verse No. 33 of Surah al-Ahzab (No. 33):

﴿إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ لِيُذۡهِبَ عَنكُمُ ٱلرِّجۡسَ أَهۡلَ ٱلۡبَيۡتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمۡ تَطۡهِيرٗا﴾

"Allah's wish is but to remove uncleanness far from you, O Folk of the Household, and cleanse you with a thorough cleansing."

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1. *Surat Al-Baqara, 2:274*. Sheikh al-Mufid, **al-Ikhtisas**, pp. 166/hadith 99; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 41:33/hadith 4; al-Hasakani, **Shawahid al-Tanzil** 1:140/hadith 155; al-Andalusi, **Tafsir al-Bahr al-Muhit** 2:344.
2. *Surat Al-Maidah, 5:55*. Ibn Tawus, **al-Tara'if**, pp. 49/hadith 42; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 35:185/hadith 4; Ibn al-Bitriq, **al-‘Umdah**, pp. 123/hadith 162; al-Suyuti, **al-Durr al-Manthur** 2:293.

This is known as the 'Verse of Purification', and it considers Imam 'Ali (as) to be one of the members of the Household of Divine Revelation, upon declaring these members as being purified from all filth and uncleanness.

4. Similarly, verse No. 61 of Surah Al-'Imran (No. 3) has declared Imam 'Ali (as) to be the same self of the Holy Prophet (sawas).[1]

5. Surah al-Insan (No. 67) testified to the sincerity and piety of Imam 'Ali and his family members. Besides, the holy Surah contains a testimony of Allah the Almighty, that these people should be in Paradise.[2]

Compilers of the most reliable reference books of the Prophet's traditions (known as *Sihah; sing. Sahih*) have dedicated special chapters of their books to the virtues of Imam 'Ali (as) as mentioned in the sayings of the Holy Prophet (sawas). In fact, humanity, in its long history, has never witnessed any man better than Imam 'Ali (as) after the Holy Prophet (sawas). In addition, no virtues more than those of Imam 'Ali (as) have been recorded for any other man in history, although this great man was exposed to public cursing from all pulpits of Juma'ah speeches during the eighty-year rule of the Umayyad dynasty, not to mention the abusive words of those who hated Imam 'Ali (as) throughout history. Though this group of people and those who hated him exerted all possible efforts to find fault with Imam 'Ali (as), they failed to find even one shortcoming, no matter how trivial. In this regard, 'Umar ibn al-Khattab reported the Holy Prophet (sawas) as saying:

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1. *Surat Al-'Imran, 3:61*. The majority of Muslim scholars, transmitters of hadith, and exegetes of the Holy Qur'an have referred to this fact. See, for instance, al-Fattal al-Nayshaburi, **Rawdat al-Wa'izin**, pp. 164, Ibn Tawus, **al-Tara'if**, pp. 43-4/hadith 38, al-Hasakani, **Shawahid al-Tanzil** 1:160-1/hadith 172, and al-Suyuti, **al-Durr al-Manthur** 2:39.
2. Sheikh al-Tusi, **Tafsir al-Tibyan** 10:204; Ibn Tawus, **al-Tara'if**, pp. 107; **Tafsir al-Baydawi** 5:426.

"No one has ever attained the like of ‘Ali’s virtue. He guides his followers to the true guidance and saves them from perdition."[1]

When Imam ‘Ali (as) was once asked why he reported from the Holy Prophet (sawas) more than any other person did, he answered:

"Whenever I asked him a question, the Holy Prophet would answer me in details; and whenever I kept silence, he would broach a subject."[2]

‘Abdullah ibn ‘Umar is reported to have said that when the Holy Prophet (sawas) brought into fraternal association each and every member of Muslim community, (one from the fresh emigrants and the other from the inhabitants of al-Madinah) ‘Ali came to him with tears in his eyes and said, "O Allah’s Messenger, you have fraternized your companions with one another and left me!" Answering him, the Holy Prophet (sawas) said:

"As for you, you are my brother in this world and the Hereafter."[3]

Abu-Layla al-Ghifari has reported that he heard the Holy Prophet (sawas) saying:

"After my departure from this world, a seditious matter will come to pass. When this takes place, you should abide by ‘Ali ibn Abi-Talib (as), for he is the first to have believed in me, the first to shake hands with me on the Resurrection Day, the greatest veracious one, and the distinguisher of this nation. He is also the

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1. Al-Tabari, **Dhakha'ir al-‘Uqba fi Manaqib Dhawi’l-Qurba**, pp. 61; al-Tabarani, **al-Mu‘jam al-Saghir** 1:241; al-Haythami, **Majma’ al-Zawa'id** 1:121.
2. Ibn Sa‘d, **al-Tabaqat al-Kubra** 2:338; al-Buladhari, **Ansab al-Ashraf**, pp. 98 H. 26; Ibn ‘Asakir, **Tarikh Madinat Dimashq** 42:379, No. 4933. **Tarjamat Al-Imam Ali (as)** no. 4933.
3. Al-Kufi, **Manaqib al-Imam ‘Ali ibn Abi-Talib** 1:325; Ibn Tawus, **al-Tara'if**, pp. 64/hadith 66; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 38:344; **Sunan al-Tirmidhi** 5:30/hadith 3804; al-Hakim al-Nayshaburi, **al-Mustadrak ‘ala al-Sahihayn** 3:14; al-Zarandi, **Nazm Durar al-Simtayn**, pp. 94.

chief of the faithful believers, while fortune is the chief of the hypocrites."[1]

All the caliphs who had competed with Imam 'Ali (as) on the office of caliphate had to confess that 'Ali was the most skilled in the field of jurisprudence and the most knowledgeable of all of the Holy Prophet's companions. They also confessed that if 'Ali had not been there, they would have most certainly perished. This confession is so famous that 'Umar's following saying has become a proverb: "Without 'Ali, 'Umar would have perished."[2]

Jabir ibn 'Abdullah al-Ansari is reported to have said:

"We used to distinguish the hypocrites from the others by one sign only; their hatred towards 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib (as)."[3]

When Mu'awiyah was informed of Imam 'Ali's (as) martyrdom, he said: "Sound Fiqh understanding and knowledge have died with the death of 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib (as)."[4]

Al-Shi'bi says: "The parable of 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib (as) in this nation (i.e. Muslims) was like that of Jesus the son of Mary among the Israelites; some people loved him so excessively that they

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1. Muhammad ibn 'Ali al-Tabari, **Bisharat al-Mustafa**, pp. 241/hadith 24; Muntajab al-Din, **al-Arba'un**, pp. 64-5/hadith 33; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 38:217/hadith 22; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, **al-Isti'ab** 4:1744, No. 3157; Ibn al-Athir, **Usd al-Ghabah** 5:287; Ibn ajar, **al-Isabah** 7:294, No. 10484. Sheikh al-Kulayni, **al-Kafi** 7:424/hadith 6; Ibn Tawus, **al-Tara'if**, pp. 255/hadith 354; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, **al-Isti'ab** 3:1103, No. 1855; al-Safadi, **al-Wafi bi'l-Wafiyyat** 21:179.
2. **Al-Kafi** 7:424/hadith 6, **Taraif Ibn Tawoos** p. 255/hadith 354, **Al-isti'ab** 3:1103, **Al- wafi bil-wafiat** for Safadi 21:179.
3. Al-Kufi, **Manaqib al-Imam 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib** 2:480/hadith 978; Ibn Tawus, **al-Tara'if**, pp. 77/hadith 104; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 36:178/hadith 171; Ibn 'Asakir, **Tarikh Madinat Dimashq** 42:287; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, **al-Istidhkar** 8:446/hadith 1776; Ibn al-Bitriq, **al-'Umdah**, pp. 216/hadith 336.
4. Al-Hilli, **al-'Udad al-Qawiyyah**, pp. 250/hadith 1; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 33:171-2/hadith 451; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, **al-Isti'ab** 3:1108; al-Barri, **al-Jawharah fi Nasab al-Imam 'Ali**, pp. 74.

overstepped all bounds of belief in God, and some others hated him; so, they went out of faith."[1]

Imam ‘Ali (as) was the most generous of all people; so, he was characterized by the morality that Allah the Almighty loves; namely, generosity and liberality. He never uttered the word "*No*" nor rejected the request of a beggar.[2]

Addressing Imam ‘Ali (as) when people swore allegiance to him as their leader, Sa'sa'ah ibn Sawhan said: "O Amir al-Mu'minin! By Allah, you have beautified the position of caliphate, but it has never beautified you. You have raised it, but it has never raised you. In fact, caliphate needs you more than you need it."[3]

Ibn Shabramah is reported to have said, "No one at all is supposed to say to people from minbars, ‘*Ask me!*’ except ‘Ali ibn Abi-Talib (as)."[4]

Al-Qa‘qa‘ ibn Zurarah stopped at the edge of Imam ‘Ali’s grave and said with grief and sorrow, "May Allah’s pleasure be with you, O Leader of the Believers! By Allah, your lifetime was the key to every item of prosperity and the lock of every item of wickedness. If people had only accepted from you, they would have been nourished from above them and from beneath them. However, they have despised the grace and preferred this world to the other world.[5]

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1. Ibn ‘Abd Rabbih al-Andalusi, **al-‘Iqd al-Farid** 2:194; Ibn Jabr, **Nahj al-«man**, pp. 491.
2. Al-Shirazi, **Kitab al-Arba’un**, pp. 417; Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 1:22.
3. Al-Kufi, **Manaqib al-Imam Amir al-Mu'minin** 1:415/hadith 329; **Tarikh al-Ya‘qub**i 2:79.
Urging people to learn and seek knowledge from him, whenever he climbed a stage for delivering a speech, Imam ‘Ali (as), used to ask people to inquire from him about anything in their minds, because he alone was able to answer all of their questions.
4. Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 7:46; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 40:190.
5. **Tarikh al-Ya’qubi** 2:213.

In his famous book, 'Imam 'Ali; the Voice of Human Justice' the Christian writer, George Jordac, wrote in the introduction:

"'Ali ibn Abi-Talib (as) is indeed one of those unique and matchless personalities whom if you know them as they are in reality, and away from the traditional level, you will come to know that the reason for their greatness and uniqueness is nothing but their absolute faith in maintaining man's dignity and giving him the holy right to live a free and respectful life. You will also realize that human beings are always promising and that inaction, retreat, and stopping at a certain state in the past or the present is nothing but omen of death and indication of extinction."[1]

Shibli Shmeil, a famous Lebanese Existentialist of the twentieth century, says:

"Imam 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib, the greatest of all great persons, was such a unique version that neither the East nor the West has ever seen a true copy of it neither in the past nor in the present."[2]

On the one hand, Imam 'Ali (as) remained as an epitome and, theoretically and practically, a perfect leader who, along with the first generation of the Holy Prophet's companions, was committed to the fundamental values of Islam, such as guidance and self-sacrifice for the sake of global reform and an all inclusive social justice; which are the perfect representation of Islam. Mu'awiyah ibn Abi-Sufyan, on the other hand, came into the political scene, by way of his clashes against Imam 'Ali (as), as a representative of the new generation of Muslims of which the Islamic conquests brought him to the height of power and made him see all events and affairs from one angle–namely, the angle of maintaining a luxurious lifestyle and worldly material gains. Of course, in such a refractory, cruel, harrowing, and annihilating clash, Mu'awiyah had the power to regenerate the irresistible mundane feelings, in destroying the unity of Muslims, to annul their religious consciousness and pull out an unrightfully acclaimed new status of the all-comprehensive religion. He managed to achieve this

1. George Jordac, **Imam 'Ali; the Voice of Human Justice**, 1:14.
2. Ibid p.35.

through the policy of totalitarianism and personal interests vis-a-vis the principled and revolutionary spirit of the other party.[1]

Professor Hashim Ma‘ruf writes:

"From birth and up to the last breath, Imam ‘Ali ibn Abi-Talib(as) was indeed such a historical event that was unfamiliar for the customs and habits of people. He came to this world from the Holy Ka’bah; therefore, his birth at that place was such a unique historical event that none had its like neither before nor after him. Just as Imam ‘Ali came to this world from the House of God, he departed it from a house of God when death came upon him while he was there practicing one of the religious rituals."

"What happened to Imam ‘Ali has never happened to any other human being. In fact, those who do not believe in him, as much as his partisans and loyalists, have placed him in the forefront of the chief intellectuals and persons of genius of the history of mankind; those who were moderate in their love for him have placed him alongside the prophets and the messengers of God; and those who loved him excessively have placed him at the level of gods."[2]

1. Burhan Ghalyun, Criticizing Policy, State, and Religion, pp. 78, 2nd Reprint, 1993, publisher: Arab Foundation for Studies and Publishing.
2. Hashim Ma’ruf al-Hasani, **Sirat al-A'immah al-Ithnay‘ashar** 1:141-2.

CHAPTER THREE
SOME ASPECTS OF IMAM 'ALI'S (AS) PERSONALITY

Imam 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib (as) possessed qualities of perfect personality, praiseworthy merits and features, sublime descent, honourable lineage, pure nature, and gratifying self that no other celebrated man could possess. He descended from the most honourable pedigree and belonged to the most immaculate bloodline. His father, Abu-Talib, was the chief of the chiefs of Quraysh; and his grandfather, 'Abd al-Muttalib, was the prince of Makkah and the chief of the lands. Besides, he was one of the lords and most renowned persons of Bani-Hashim.[1]

Imam 'Ali (as) is characterized by his close relationship to the Holy Prophet (sawas), being his (paternal) cousin, his son-in-law, and the dearest of all of his family members to him. Imam 'Ali (as) was charged with the job of writing down the Divine Revelation, as was revealed to the Holy Prophet (sawas) and was the closest of all people to the Holy Prophet's eloquence and purity of language, memorizing his words and maxims more than any other person did.

Imam 'Ali (as) embraced Islam at the hands of the Holy Prophet (sawas) before his heart could be stained by any other faith or his intellect mixed by the blending of polytheism. In his adolescence, he was always present with the Holy Prophet (sawas) during his departure and arrival, at times of war and peace, until he learnt the manners of the Holy Prophet (sawas) completely and attained his character.

Imam 'Ali's (as) religious identity and thorough knowledge was developed and gained through that which was divinely revealed, by the Holy Spirit, to the Holy Prophet (sawas). For this reason, he was the most knowledgeable of all of the Holy Prophet's

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1. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah**; the Introduction 1:3-4; revised by Muhammad Abu'l-Fadl Ibrahim.

companions, the most skilful in the field of judicature, the most adroit in religious issues. He was also the most competent in defending Islamic causes, the most accurate in the issuance of verdicts and the closest of them all to the truth. Because of these peculiarities, 'Umar ibn al-Khattab declared more than once, "May Allah never keep me alive to face a problem while Abu'l-Hassan (i.e. Imam 'Ali) is not there for me!"[1]

Imam 'Ali (as) was known to be the most knowledgeable, well-experienced, worldly-wise, conversant, and well-versed of all the companions; and had a gentle sense, was of an immaculate origin, possessed a brilliant soul, had good taste, a shrewd opinion, prudent judgment, was quick witted, had a nimble humour, and was well-conversant with all significant issues. [2]

Worship and Piety

Imam 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib (as) is well-known for his profound piety, which reflected greatly upon his personal behaviour, as well as his conduct with his family members and all other people. For the majority of people, piety and religiousness could sometimes be a reaction to their weak-willed personalities, an attempt to escape facing certain people as well as the difficulties of their lives, or a hereditary mania coming from the people's general view of hallowing all social traditions. Yet, for Imam 'Ali (as), his piety and religiousness originated from his extraordinary power, adopted to bring together the extremes of the ring of creation, tied and extended so compactly that it even linked the sky and the earth. For him, worship is an act of jihad and struggle, for the sake of providing mankind with perfect examples of goodness and prosperity. Piety, in Imam 'Ali's (as) sight, was the essence of rebellion against corruption;through piety, Imam 'Ali (as) challenged corruption, hypocrisy, exploitation and fought against the struggle for personal whims, against humility, poverty,

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1. Sheikh al-Mufid, **Kitab al-Irshad** 1:204; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 40:149/hadith 54; al-Buladhari, **Ansab al-Ashraf**, pp. 100/hadith 29; al-Khawarizmi, **al-Manaqib**, pp. 97/hadith 98.
2. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah**; the Introduction; revised by Muhammad Abu'l-Fadl Ibrahim.

weakness and vulnerability, and all negative traits prevalent in his era, which was chaotic and disorderly.

A deep pondering over Imam 'Ali's piety and worship shows that he was unique in worship and piety in the same way as he was in his policies and administration. In his worship, we can manifestly notice an infatuation of a poet who stands erect in the temple of the vast cosmos with apure soul and a heart full of love. Once the beauties of this universe rose before him, they accorded with the echoes, shadows, and standards, filling his entity; and so he issued such a wonderful maxim that comprised an overall constitution, representing the piety of the freemen and the worship of the great:[1]

"One group worships Allah in order to be favoured with His blessings. This is the worship of tradesmen. Another group worships Him on account of his fear. This is the worship of slaves. A third group worships Him by way of thanksgiving. This is the worship of freemen."[2]

Imam 'Ali's worship of Allah has nothing at all to do with the negativity of the fearful fugitives or the greedy tradesman, which is the manner of the majority of worshippers; rather, it is part of the positivity of the great, worldly-wise, intelligent, and sensitive man who is completely heedful to the universe and to himself on account of his experience, sound reason, and sensitivity.

In the frame of this very sense of piety and worship, Imam 'Ali (as) instructed people to fear Allah for the sake of achieving prosperity to humanity and for the sake of achieving a matter that is more significant than the desires of the tradesmen, for gaining the bliss of the Hereafter. Thus, Imam 'Ali (as) used to direct people towards piety, hoping that they would find in it that which would encourage them to be just, giving the oppressed back their deprived rights, taken from the tyrant:

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1. George Jordac, **Imam 'Ali; the Voice of Human Justice**, pp. 85.
2. **Nahj al-Balaghah** 4:53; Aphorism No. 237.

"Adhere to fear of Allah, because it helps you establish justice with the friend and the foe."[1]

In the concept of Imam ‘Ali (as), piety (in the sense of fear for Allah) is worthless unless it urges you to confess the truth before you testify to it, to avoid acting unfairly towards one whom you hate, and to avoid committing any sin. In this sense of worship and piety, life is not desired for gaining a moment of joy or a transient elation.

Asceticism (humbleness)

Imam ‘Ali (as) renounced all worldly pleasures as honestly as he did in all of his words and deeds, thus living in austerity, rejecting the pleasure of power and authority as well as all other pleasures aspired by others who believed that their existence depended upon gaining these transitory pleasures. Imam ‘Ali, along with his sons and family members, lived in a very simple house at which caliphate (i.e. succession to the Holy Prophet), but not sovereignty, lodged. At that house, he used to eat nothing but barley, which was ground by his wife, while his officials and deputy governors lived on the most delicious food of Syria, Egypt, and Iraq. On many occasions, Imam ‘Ali (as) did not want his wife to grind his food; therefore, he himself grinded the barley and ate bread that was so dry that he had to break it into pieces on his knee. When cold weather attacked him, he would not use a coat to escape the chilly winds; rather, he would use summer garments so as to take delight in true asceticism and mysticism.

Harun ibn ‘Antarah reported that he once visited Imam ‘Ali (as) and found him putting on a worn garment while trembling from the cold. "O Leader of the Believers," said ‘Antarah, "Almighty Allah has decided a portion of this public treasury for you and your family. Why are you in such a state?"

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1. **Tuhaf Al-'aqul** p.88, **Bihar al-Anwar** 74:236/hadith 1, **Nozhat Al-nathir wa Tanbih Al-khatir**.61/hadith 42.

In reply, the Imam (as) said:

"*By Allah, I will never prejudice any amount of your money. This is in fact the very garment of mine which I wore when I left my homeland al-Madinah*."[1]

One day, a type of sweet delicacy (known as *faludhaj*) was presented to Imam 'Ali (as) who commented:

"*By Allah, this food is of good smell, nice colour, and sweet taste, but I do not like to familiarize myself with something that I am not accustomed to*."[2]

In fact, this asceticism of Imam 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib was nothing more than an aspect of his chivalry and mood, even though some may feel that chivalry is extremely different from mood.

It is this exceptional conduct of the Imam that made 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, a ruler of the Umayyad dynasty, hate Imam 'Ali (as) excessively. This caused him to fabricate wrongdoings against him, and curse him from public stages for eighty years, while declaring: "The most ascetic of all people in this world is 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib."[3]

It is familiarly known to everybody that Imam 'Ali (as), when he moved to al-Kufah and made it the capital of his state, refused to reside in the famous palace known as *Qasawasr al-Imarah*, which was built to be the dwelling place of the ruler. He refused in order that his dwelling place would not be higher than the houses of the many poor people who lived in miserable poverty. Expressing this view and lifestyle, Imam 'Ali (as) declared:

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1. Al-Irbali, **Kashf al-Ghummah** 1:172; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 40:334/hadith 15; Ibn 'Asakir, **Tarikh Madinat Dimashq** 42:477; Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 3:400, tarjamat Amir Al-muminin (as) no.4933, (what happened in year 40H.).
2. Abu-Na'im, **ilyat al-Awliya'** 1:81; al-Muttaqi al-Hindi, **Kanz al-'Ummal** 13:184/hadith 36549.
3. Al-Irbali, **Kashf al-Ghummah** 1:162; al-Khawarizmi, **al-Manaqib**, pp. 117/hadith 128.

"*Shall I be content with being called Amir al-Mu'minin (the Commander of the Believers), although I do not share with the people the hardships of the world*?"[1]

Chivalry and Sense of Honour

Imam ‘Ali ibn Abi-Talib (as) embodied chivalry perfectly with magnanimity. Because sense of honour and pride are two roots of the spirit of chivalry, they must have been within Imam ‘Ali’s qualities; therefore, it was disdainful for him to hurt any person even though that person had hurt him, or to assault against any individual, even if he was sure that the individual had the intention to kill him.

It is this spirit of chivalry and sense of honour that made Imam ‘Ali (as) reluctant to reply to the Umayyad boorish tyrants with curses, although they did not cease to dreadfully curse him; rather, Imam ‘Ali (as) even warned his companions and followers against swearing at the indecent Umayyad persons, saying:

"*I dislike you starting to abuse them; but if you describe their deeds and recount their situations, this would be a better mode of speaking and a more convincing way of arguing. Instead of abusing them you should say, ‘O Allah! Save our blood and their blood, produce reconciliation between us and them, and lead them out of their misguidance so that he who is ignorant of the truth may know it, and he who inclines towards rebellion and revolt may turn away from it*."[2]

Elevated Personality

Imam ‘Ali’s (as) personality is rare to find in the entire history of mankind. In fact, the anecdotes of his elevated personality are too many to count; yet, let us refer to two of them:

Although his soldiers were in the highest mood of retaliation and wrath, he ordered them not to kill any of their enemies who retreated, not to unveil any cover, and not to seize any property. On another occasion, Imam ‘Ali (as) was able to capture his

1. **Nahj al-Balaghah**, 45.3:72 letter no.45 to Authman bin Hanif.
2. **Nahj al-Balaghah** 2:185/sermon 206.

bitterest enemies, who would wait for the least opportunity to annihilate him, but he pardoned them, treated them well, and ordered his followers not to mistreat them at all, although they were able to do so.[1]

Honesty and Sincerity

Such nobilities of character cling together in an endless series, since some of them guide each other. However, the most wonderful of the rings of this series is honesty and sincerity. In this respect, Imam 'Ali's utmost honesty caused him to lose the position of *caliphate*. Besides, if he had been satisfied to replace honesty with any other thing, no enemy could have ever affected him nor could any friend have left him. For instance, Imam 'Ali (as) refused to acknowledge Mu'awiyah's actions, saying:

"I shall never flatter anyone on account of my faith, nor shall I give up my morals for the sake of winning my case."[2]

When Mu'awiyah engaged in his sly tactics, Imam 'Ali (as) declared his famous statement, which should be understood as being an archetype of a great personality:

"*By Allah, Mu'awiyah is never more cunning than I am, but he deceives and commits evil deeds. Had I not been hateful of deceit, I would have been the most cunning of all men."*[3]

Stressing the necessity of honesty under all circumstances, Imam 'Ali (as) said:

"*True faith is to prefer honesty to lying, although the earlier will harm you while the latter will benefit you*."[4]

Courage

Courage, to Imam 'Ali (as), was as important as expression is to an idea and work is to willpower. This is so because courage is based on defence for a nature of truth and belief in goodness. It is

1. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 1:22-3.
2. Ibn al-Sabbagh, **al-Fusul al-Muhimmah**, pp. 64.
3. **Nahj al-Balaghah**, Sermon No. 200.
4. Ibid 4:105 advice no. 458.

famously known that no hero could ever confront Imam ‘Ali (as) in any battlefield because the Imam, who challenged even death, never feared any valiant. Moreover, the idea of death never passed through his mind while on a battlefield. It is also worth mentioning that he never came to blows with a warrior before being able to talk to him about true guidance and give excellent advice.[1]

Imam ‘Ali (as) refrained from transgressing under any condition despite his exceptional power and strength, and historians have unanimously reported that he disliked fighting and only fought if forced; he therefore endeavoured to settle disputes with foes in a peaceful way, so as to spare bloodshed and avoid fighting.

Refraining from transgression was one of Imam ‘Ali’s (as) moral principles and added to his noble character. Moreover, this quality is a crucial part of the general principles of his personality, which is based on fulfilment of covenants, maintenance of conventions, and the merciful treatment of people, including those that break their covenants and act mercilessly. Because of the great flow of faithfulness and tenderness in which Imam ‘Ali’s (as) heart abounded, he never chose enmity over friendship. Unfortunately, the friends of this affectionate and friendly man did not observe their friendship with him, because they did not believe that he would someday give them full rein to devour the fortunes of the earth illegally. He thus said:

"*By Allah, even if I am given all the domains of the seven (stars) with all that exists under the skies in order that I may disobey Allah to the extent of snatching one grain of barley from an ant, I would not do it. To me, your world is lighter than the leaf in the mouth of a locust that is chewing it*."[2]

In this regard, Imam ‘Ali (as) does not merely speak and put his words into practice, his words flow spontaneously from his heart and soul. In fact, Imam ‘Ali (as) was the kindest of all people to the people, and was too noble to harm anybody, since he was the first of all to sacrifice himself for the sake of the prosperity of people, as long as such self-sacrifice satisfied his conscience.

1. Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 1:20-21.
2. **Nahj al-Balaghah**, 2:218/sermon 224.

Thus, his entire lifetime was a series of struggles for the sake of helping the wronged and the downtrodden and supporting the people against the *masters* and the *heirs of the past glories* who employed these people for their own interests. Imam ‘Ali (as) was indeed a sword unsheathed against the necks of the tyrants of Quraysh, who desired the gain of power, authority, and prestige in order to amass illegally gotten properties. Imam ‘Ali (as) gave up leadership and a luxurious life, as he refused to comply with the seekers of worldly pleasures, who intended to enslave their weak, poor, and oppressed brethren.

Justice

It is not strange that Imam ‘Ali (as) represents the fairest of all just people; rather, what is strange, is that he is not so! In fact, reports on Imam ‘Ali’s (as) establishment of justice is a heritage that gives honour to humanity in its status and spirit. He did not disdain being treated just like his subjects in disputes and prosecution; rather, he always proceeded to prosecution when necessary, as he was saturated with the spirit of justice.

Justice also flowed in Imam ‘Ali’s soul even for the simplest of matters. In fact, his written teachings and epistles to his deputy governors are virtually on one point; that is, justice. In fact, justice has won in the heart of Imam ‘Ali (as) and his followers, although they and he had been wronged.

Modesty

One of the moral principles of Imam ‘Ali (as) was his modesty and loathing for affectation; in fact, he used to say: "*The worst comrade is he for whom formality has to be observed."* He also said, *"If a believer observes excessive respect with his brother-in-faith, it means that he leaves him.*"[1]

Imam ‘Ali (as) never pretended to say what he believed, nor was it hard for him to give advice. It was not difficult for him to give gifts and he did not deprive others. These qualities remained with him in all of his ways and good manners so firmly that everyone

1. **Nahj al-Balaghah** 4:110, Advice no.479&480.

would despair to bribe him. Some people accused the Imam of cruelty, haughtiness, and arrogance as they were misunderstanding this quality! Certainly, expressing one's actual feeling should never be grasped as haughtiness, nor arrogance, rather, the Imam despised these two negative features. In many of his advices, he warned his sons, assistants, and officials against haughtiness, saying: "Beware of self-conceit! Be it known to you that self-conceit is the opposite of correctitude and the epidemic of intellects."[1]

Just as much as he despised feigning that which was practiced by those who loved him disproportionately, so did he despise dissembling that which was shown by those who hated him excessively. He thus said: "Two categories of persons will face ruin on account of me: he who loves me with exaggeration, and he who hates me intensely."[2]

Imam 'Ali (as) used to face his enemies bareheaded and barefooted; is it then strange for him to face them *bare-self* while they were heavily masked with trickery and ostentation?

Purity

One of Imam 'Ali's (as) distinctive features was his sound-heartedness; he never had any feeling of hostility towards any person nor did he ever hate anybody, including his bitterest enemies and rivals as well as those who envied and hated him intensely.

Generosity

Although Imam 'Ali's generosity, which was one of the nobilities of his character, was limitless;it was pure generosity without any hidden agendas. His generosity was not false, like the rulers who used people's properties, titles, and efforts as a show of *generosity*. In fact, such fake generosity was never shown by Imam 'Ali (as); rather, the Imam's generosity expressed a long list of high moral standards. At the same time as Imam 'Ali (as) scolded one of his

1. **Nahj al-Balaghah** 3:46 letter no.31 for his son Al-hassan (as).
2. **Nahj al-Balaghah** 4:28, advice no. 117

daughters intensely just because she borrowed a necklace from the public treasury to wear on one of the feast days, he hired himself to a Jewish family in al-Madinah to water their date-palms for a wage. Once he received the wage, he immediately distributed the funds amongst the poor needy people, and bought some slaves so as to manumit them at once for the sake of winning God's pleasure. Even Mu'awiyah ibn Abi-Sufyan, the archenemy of Imam 'Ali (as), witnessed his generosity, saying, "If 'Ali (as) possessed a golden house and one made of hay, he would most certainly give his golden house as alms before the other one."[1]

Knowledge ability and Skills

Of Imam 'Ali's (as) knowledge, ability and skills, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid said:

"What could I possibly say about a man to whom all virtues are ascribed, all sects claim to belong, and all groups try to pull in their direction. As for virtues, he is indeed their head, fount, initiator, inventor, and best representative.

Everybody who was known of a virtue must have derived it from him (i.e. Imam 'Ali), patterned after him, and followed his example. Most surely, the highest of all sciences; that is, divinity, has been quoted from his words, reported from him, traced back to him, and initiated by him. As for the science of jurisprudence, he (i.e. Imam 'Ali) was its origin and principle. Thus, every Muslim jurisprudent must have depended upon him and derived from his jurisprudence. As for Qur'anic exegesis, this science has been taken from him and branched on account of the rules he put. As for the science of mystic methods and the manners of Sufism, the masters of this mystical system in the various Muslim countries claim adopting their methods from him and stop at him. As for Arabic grammar and syntax, it is well-known for all people that he (Imam 'Ali) was the founder and originator of this science. He then dictated the principles and basics of this science to Abu'l-Aswad al-Du'ali."

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1. Al-Irbali, **Kashf al-Ghummah** 2:48; 'Allamah al-Hilli, **Kashf al-Yaqin**, pp. 475; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 1:22; Ibn Qutaybah, **al-Imamah wa'l-Siyasah** 1:101.

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid adds:

"*As for eloquence, he is indeed the chief of the eloquent and the leader of the well-expressed. Describing his wording, it is said, "His wording is below the wording of the Creator, but over the wording of created beings." People learned elocution and literature from him. By Allah I swear, it was none but him who taught the people of Quraysh how to speak eloquently. His book on which I am currently commenting (i.e. Nahj al-Balaghah) is a sufficient proof that Imam 'Ali is matchless in eloquence and unrivalled in expressiveness*."

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid then adds:

"*As for aloofness from worldly pleasures, he was indeed the chief of all ascetics, the choicest of the most righteous ones, towards him alone must all travel preparations be made (because he is the worthiest of being met), and at him alone must all saddlebags be put down. He never ate his fill, because he, more than all other people, used to eat the most tasteless food and put on the roughest clothes.*

As for his devotional acts, he worshipped the Almighty more than anyone else did and he was the foremost of all people in offering prayers and observing fast. From him, people learned the night prayer, the persistence on litanies and devotional rites, and offering supererogatory prayers. How would you possibly describe the persistence on devotional rites of a man who, at the bloodiest night of the Battle of Siffin,[1] *asked his followers to extend a leather*

1. The most violent encounter in the Battle of Siffin (that was waged by Imam 'Ali and his troops against the rebellious Mu'awiyah ibn Abi-Sufyan and his troops) is known as laylat al-harir (the night of the growl), because the two armies issued sounds like growling. On this night, the two armies advanced towards each other and shot each other with arrows and stones until they expired. They then stabbed each other with spears until they broke into pieces. They then faced each other with swords and iron instruments and no sound could be heard on that night except the sound of iron. The encounter lasted for about twenty-four hours during which about seventy thousand persons from the two armies were killed. As a result, the military forces of Mu'awiyah's army were crushed so violently that Mu'awiyah himself was on the point of running away.

rug between the two combating armies for him so that he would offer his devotional rites, while arrows were falling to his right and left like rain and passing by his ears ceaselessly? Nevertheless, this violent situation could not terrify him for even a winking of an eye; therefore, he did not move before he had accomplished his devotional acts.

If you ponder over his supplications and litanies, understand the highly meaningful expressions of glorification and reverence of Allah the Almighty contained by these supplications, and appreciate the words of submission to God, reverence before His Almightiness, and acquiescence to Him, you will realize the amount of sincerity to the Almighty carried by Imam ‘Ali and you will appreciate how unique the heart that authored these words is and how eloquent the tongue that pronounced these words! Imam ‘Ali ibn al-Hussain Zain al-‘Abidin, who was well-known of his exceptional worship, says, "If my worship is compared to the worship of my grandfather (‘Ali ibn Abi-Talib), it will be the same as comparing my grandfather’s worship to the Holy Prophet’s."

As for Imam ‘Ali’s constant recitation of the Holy Qur'an and preoccupying himself with it, he was the most famous in this regard. All historians have unanimously admitted that Imam ‘Ali (as) retained the Holy Qur'an entirely since the lifetime of the Holy Prophet (sawas) when none else did. Besides, it was Imam ‘Ali who compiled the Holy Qur'an in one copy. If you look up in the books of the different ways of recitation of the Holy Qur'an, you will discover that the founders of all of these ways of recitation referred to Imam ‘Ali in this respect.

Finally, what could I possibly say about a man whom is loved by non-Muslims although they disbelieve in the Holy Prophet’s prophethood, is glorified by philosophers although they reject the religion, and whose picture is portrayed by the kings of France and Rome and placed in their temples and places of worship carrying his sword?

What could I possible say about a man in whom everybody wished to take pride, and in being a descendant of whom everybody desired to boast and sing praises?

What could I possibly say about a man who preceded everybody else to true guidance and none could come before him to the belief of monotheism except the foremost to all virtues; namely, Muhammad the Holy Prophet (sawas)."[1]

1. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah**, the Introduction 1:16-30, for Mohammad abi Al-fadil Ibrahim.

SECTION TWO

It Consists Of Three chapters:

Chapter One
The Family Of Imam 'Ali

Chapter Two
Stages Of Imam 'Ali's life

Chapter Three
Imam 'Ali; From Birth to the Prophet's Death

CHAPTER ONE
THE FAMILY OF IMAM 'ALI, BRILLIANT LINEAGE

Imam 'Ali, the*master of the faithful* and the chief of the prophets' successors, is the son of Abu-Talib, son of 'Abd al-Muttalib, son of Hashim, son of 'Abd-Manaf, son of Qusay, son of Kilab, son of Murrah, son of Ka'b, son of Lu'ay, son of Ghalib, son of Fihr, son of Malik, son of al-Nadr, son of Kinanah, son of Khuzaymah, son of Mudrikah, son of Iyas, son of Mudar, son of Nizar, son of Ma'd, son of 'Andan.

His Eminent Grandfather

His paternal grandfather, 'Abd al-Muttalib, was nicknamed *shaybat al-hamd*; meaning, the praiseworthy grey-haired chief, and his *kunyah* (i.e. an agnomen given as an honour, usually starting with *abu*; the father of…) was Abu'l-Harth. The Holy Prophet's lineage is united with 'Abd al-Muttalib's, who was a believer in Allah the Almighty and had already known that Muhammad would be prophet of Allah.[1]

When death came to him, 'Abd al-Muttalib called for his son Abu-Talib and said to him, "O son, you know how intensely I loved Muhammad and cared for him. Now, consider how you will show respect for me through this Muhammad."

Answering his father, Abu-Talib said: "*O father, you do not have to instruct me how to care for Muhammad, for he is not only my nephew, but also like my own son.*"[2]

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1. Ibn Sa'd, **al-Tabaqat al-Kubra** 1:118.
2. Ibn Shahr'ashub, **al-Manaqib** 1:62; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 3:68/hadith 30.

His Father; the Believer of Quraysh

The real name of Imam 'Ali's father was 'Abd-Manaf, 'Imran according to another narration,[1] or Shaybah according to a third one. Abu-Talib was only one of his bynames. He was the full brother of 'Abdulluh, the Holy Prophet's father.

Thirty five years before the Holy Prophet's birth, Abu-Talib was born in Makkah. After the demise of his father 'Abd al-Muttalib, the ultimate chieftainship of Quraysh was entrusted to him. Before that, he was in charge of serving the pilgrims to the Holy Ka'bah and the delegations that came to Makkah with water. This mission was known as *siqayah*. Rejecting to worship the idols, Abu-Talib believed in Allah as the One and Only God and forbade marriage of close relatives, the burying alive of female newborns, fornication and adultery, drinking intoxicants, and the circumambulation around the Holy Ka'bah naked.

Immediately after the demise of 'Abd al-Muttalib, Abu-Talib bound himself with the custody of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sawas); hence, he loved him so affectionately and even more than his own sons. Therefore, Muhammad (sawas) used to sleep next to his uncle, accompany him on all of his journeys, and received special food from him that he would not give even to his own sons.[2]

Abu-Talib is reported to have once summoned all the descendants of 'Abd al-Muttalib and said to them, "You shall be in prosperity as long as you listen to and follow the directions of Muhammad. So, you must follow and support him so that you will be led aright."

The polytheists of Quraysh could not harm the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sawas) as long as Abu-Talib was alive.[3]

Abu-Talib passed away at the age of eighty and a few years,[4] three years before the Holy Prophet's Migration to Yathrib (*hegira*) and

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1. Al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 35:138; Ibn ajar, **al-Isabah** 7:196.
2. 'Ali Khan al-Madani, **al-Darajat al-Rafi'ah fi Tabaqat al-Shi'ah**, pp. 41-42; Ibn Hajar, **al-Isabah** 7:196.
3. Ibn Sa'd, **al-Tabaqat al-Kubra** 1:123-124. **al-Tabaqat al-kubra** 1: 123&124.
4. Ibid. 1:125; Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 2:190.

after the siege that was imposed on Banu-Hashim (i.e. the descendants of Hashim; the Holy Prophet's grandfather) who were detained in a col (i.e. a mountain hideout), later known as *shi'b abi-talib* (Col Abu-Talib).

The Holy Prophet (sawas) was passionately attached to his uncle; he lived under his custody for forty-three years, since the age of eight, when his grandfather 'Abd al-Muttalib passed away.

Abu-Talib is proved to have been monotheist; he believed in Allah and accepted Islam as the ultimate religion so firmly until passing away. However, he had to conceal his faith in Islam so as to be able to protect the Holy Prophet (sawas) properly. Thus, by concealing his belief, Abu-Talib could contact the polytheists of Makkah and learn about their trickeries and plots against the Holy Prophet. Thus, just like the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, Abu-Talib used to live in a state of pious dissimulation. On account of his precedence to believe in Islam and his pious dissimulation, Allah the Almighty shall grant him his reward twice.[1]

His Mother

Imam 'Ali's mother was Fatimah bint (i.e. the daughter of) Asad ibn Hashim ibn 'Abd-Manaf. She was a cousin of her husband Abu-Talib, since they had the same grandfather, Hashim. Fatimah bint Asad embraced Islam during the early stages of the Holy Prophet's promulgation, fleeing from her homeland by his order and was one of the first ladies to embrace Islam. To the Holy Prophet (sawas), she was exactly like his mother;[2] and nurtured him in her lap.

When she passed away, the Holy Prophet (sawas) entered her chamber, sat next to her head, and said:

"*May Allah have mercy upon you, mother! You were to me the second mother after the one who gave birth to me. You suffered*

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1. Al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 35:72. See also Muhammad Rida al-Tabsi, Munyat al-Talib fi «man Abi-Talib, 'Abdullah al-Khunayzi, Abu-Talib Mu'min Quraysh, and Muhammad Hadi al-Yusufi, **Mawsu'at al-Tarikh al-Islami** 1:514-7 & 596-601.
2. Ibn al-Sabbagh al-Maliki, **al-Fusul al-Muhimmah**, p. 30-31.

hunger in order to satiate me, had lack of dress in order to provide clothes for me, and deprived yourself of delicious food in order to hand it over to me. You did all that for the purpose of winning Allah's pleasure and the bliss of the Next World."

The Holy Prophet (sawas) then closed her eyes and ordered that her body should be washed with water three times. The third time, camphor was mixed with the water. The Holy Prophet (sawas) himself poured that water on her body. He then took off his shirt and put it on her dead body. She was then enshrouded with a plain shroud. The Holy Prophet (sawas) then ordered Usamah ibn Zaid-his manumitted slave, Abu-Ayyub al-Ansari, 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, and a black servant to dig a grave for her. When they reached the last stage, the Holy Prophet (sawas) continued digging with his own hands. He then entered the grave, lying down inside for a while, and then uttered these words:

"It is Allah alone, who gives life and causes to die; while He is everliving and He never dies. O, Allah! Please, forgive my mother Fatimah bint Asad ibn Hashim, teach her how to say her argument, and expand her grave. Please do all that in the name of Your Prophet and the prophets who existed before him, for You are verily the most merciful of all those who show mercy."[1]

Assisted by al-'Abbas and Abu-Bakr, the Holy Prophet (sawas) placed the dead body in the grave. Upon seeing what he had done to Fatimah bint Asad, some people asked: "O Allah's Messenger, we have noticed that you placed on her something that you have never placed on any other person. Why was that?" Answering, the Holy Prophet (sawas) said:

"I dressed her with my shirt so that she will be dressed from the garments of Paradise, and I laid down in her grave so that the grave pressure will be made easy for her. After Abu-Talib, none of Allah's creatures was more compassionate to me than she was.

1. Al-Khawarizmi, **al-Manaqib**, pp. 47-8/hadith 10; al-Haythami, **Majm'a al-Zawa'id** 9:256-7; al-Salihi al-Shami, **Subul al-Huda wa'l-Rashad** 11:287.

May Allah be pleased with Abu-Talib and her and have mercy upon both of them!"[1]

1. Ibn al-Sabbagh al-Makki, **al-Fusul al-Muhimmah**, pp. 31. According to al-Hamawini's Fara'id al-Simtayns (1/379), the Holy Prophet (s) was asked, "You have done something for this woman that you have never done for any other person…"
The details of Lady Fatimah bint Asad's early conversion to Islam, migration, tenderness towards, and custody of the Holy Prophet (s), as well as her passing away and the words of the Holy Prophet (s) in praise of her– all have been mentioned by numerous historiographers and authors in their reference books; such as Ibn 'Asakir, Ibn al-Athir, Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, Muhibb al-Din al-Tabari, Muhammad ibn Talhah, al-Shabalnaji, Ibn al-Sabbagh, al-Buladhari, and many others.

CHAPTER TWO
STAGES OF IMAM 'ALI'S LIFE

Imam 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib (as) was born ten years before the start of the Holy Prophet's mission and lived through Islam's early stages, including the Makkah and Madinah period. The first stage was regarded as being the era of establishing the fundamental Muslim community by creating a steady social foundation of Islam. Imam 'Ali (as) was there to witness all of the events that took place in al-Madinah, the location in which the Islamic state was built under the leadership of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sawas). Hence, he contributed to building this lofty entity so perfectly that everyone could evidently see the profundity of his role in that process.

By the command of the Holy Prophet (sawas), Imam 'Ali (as) was the bearer of the torch of true divine guidance and the leadership of Islam after the passing away of the Holy Prophet (sawas), even though a large number of the Prophet's companions retreated, rebelling against the Holy Prophet's instructions, forsaking their leader Imam 'Ali (as), and worked persistently on preventing him from assuming the political leadership of the Muslim community. Nevertheless, Imam 'Ali (as) continued to carry out his principled tasks under these critical circumstances and lived with the *caliphs* although he believed that "*his position in relation to it was the same as the position of the axis in relation to the hand-mill*." Nevertheless, "*he adopted patience although there was pricking in the eye*," for twenty-five years until a set of the consequences occurred following a huge mistake committed against Imam 'Ali (as). This was revealed to the masses that had strayed off the divinely ordained plan of the Holy Prophet (sawas).

Only then did the masses return back to Imam 'Ali (as) so as to hand over the reins of rule and government to him upon witnessing all these calamities and breakdown of their nation. Notwithstanding, Imam 'Ali (as) carried the burden of leadership competently and with all eligibility for about half a decade until

sacrificing his immaculate blood for the sake of Allah, in order to seek His pleasure. He did so that the principles and values of the Islamic mission would remain steady after he had struggled painstakingly for the purpose of establishing them in the sentiment of the Muslim community and in the conscience of human society.

In view of the aforesaid preamble, the lifetime of Imam 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib (as) can be classified into two major halves:

The **first half** involves his lifetime since birth, up to the passing away of the Holy Prophet (sawas).

The **second half** involves his lifetime following the passing of the Holy Prophet (sawas) when Imam 'Ali (as) undertook the tasks of his Imamate, up to his martyrdom in the niche (*mihrab*) of worship.

Owing to the variety of the roles played by the Imam, as a result of the miscellany of circumstances he passed through, it is possible to classify his lifetime into several stages, as follows:

First Stage: From birth to the blessed Prophetic mission.

Second Stage: From the Prophetic mission to migration.

Third Stage: From migration to the passing away of the Holy Prophet (sawas).

In fact, these three stages come under the first half of his lifetime, when his absolute compliance with and heroic defence of the Holy Prophet (sawas) and Islam was extremely noticeable.

Fourth Stage: His lifetime during the reigns of Abu-Bakr, 'Umar, and 'Uthman.

Fifth Stage: His lifetime during his time in power.

Details of the first three stages will be presented in Chapter 3 of Part II, while Part III, with its four chapters, will be dedicated to studying the fourth stage of his lifetime. Part IV of the current book will be dedicated to studying the fifth stage of Imam 'Ali's lifetime.

CHAPTER THREE
IMAM 'ALI; FROM BIRTH TO THE BLESSED PROPHETIC MISSION

First Stage: From Birth to the Prophetic Mission

Imam 'Ali's Birth

Imam 'Ali (as) says:

"I was born on the natural religion (Islam), and was foremost in accepting it as well as in migrating (heira)."[1]

On Friday, the thirteenth of Rajab, thirty years after the Year of the Elephant (which corresponds to the year AH 570) and twenty-three years before the Hegira,[2] Imam 'Ali (as) was born in the holy city of Makkah, inside the Holy Precinct, and in the heart of Holy Ka'bah. Neither before, nor after, was anybody born in that sacred place. This is in fact an exceptional virtue that Allah the Almighty gave exclusively to Imam 'Ali (as) as an indication of his high esteem, supreme rank, and obvious honour.

Yazid ibn Qa'nab is reported to have said: I was sitting with al-'Abbas ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib and a group of Banu-'Abd al-'Uzza in front of the Holy House of God (i.e. Holy Ka'bah) when Fatimah bint Asad, who was nine months pregnant with 'Ali passed by us. As she felt the throes of childbirth, she hurried towards the Holy Ka'bah and said, "O Lord, I do believe in You and in the Messengers and Books that have been brought from You. I also give full credence to the words of my grandfather, Abraham, who built this house. I now beseech You in the name of him who built

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1. **Nahj al-Balaghah**, Sermon No. 57; al-Tabarsi, **I'lam al-Wara bi-A'lam al-Huda** 1:340; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 38:255 & 39:325/hadith 27; Ibn 'Arabi, **Tafsir** 2:345; Ibn Abi'l-hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 4:54.
2. Sheikh al-Mufid, **al-Muqni'ah**, pp. 461; al-Sharif al-Radi, **Khasa'is al-A'immah**, pp. 39; al-Fattal al-Nayshaburi, **Rawdat al-Wa'izin**, pp. 76; Ibn Shahr'ashub, **Manaqib** 3:353; al-Mas'udi, **Muruj al-Dhahab** 2:349; Ibn al-Sabbagh, **al-Fusul al-Muhimmah**, pp. 29.

this house and in the name of the child I am carrying in my womb to make easy my deliverance of this baby."

Immediately after that, I saw the Holy House rent asunder and Fatimah entered inside it from that rent, and we could not see her anymore. Then, the wall regained its first state. We then tried to unlock the door's lock, but we could not. So, we realized that this was an affair of God. On the fourth day, Fatimah left the House carrying between her arms 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib.[1]

Once these good tidings were passed on to Abu-Talib and his family members, they all came in a hurry while their faces were full of joy. Amongst these family members, Muhammad (sawas) and his wife Lady Khadijah, who at the time lived in the house of his uncle Abu-Talib-moved forwards, took the newborn, embraced him, and carried him to his father Abu-Talib. The name of ''Ali' came to the mind of Abu-Talib; he therefore decided to give this name to his newborn. Afterwards, Abu-Talib held a formal meal in honour of the newborn, where a large quantity of meat was served to the invitees.[2]

Nicknames and Agnomens of Imam 'Ali

Imam 'Ali (as) had innumerable nicknames, agnomens, and epithets, all of which were given to him by the Holy Prophet (sawas) on various occasions and situations when Imam 'Ali (as) had promulgated for Islam and defended the Holy Prophet (sawas). Amongst these many nicknames was: *Amir al-Mu'minin* (commander of the believers), *ya'sub al-din wa'l-muslimin*[3] (chief of the religion and the Muslims), *Mubir al-Shirk wa'l-Mushrikin* (the terminator of polytheism and the polytheists), *Qatil al-nakithin wa'l-Qasitin wa'l-Mariqin* (the slayer of the breakers of their pledge, the wrongdoers, and the apostates) *Mawla al-Mu'minin* (the guardian of the believers), *Shabih-Harun* (the match

1. Sheikh al-Saduq, **al-Amali**, pp. 194-5; Sheikh al-Tusi, **al-Amali**, pp. 706-7/hadith 1511; al-Fattal al-Nayshaburi, **Rawdat al-Wa'izin**, pp. 76-7; Ibn Hamzah al-Tusi, **al-Thaqib fi'l-Manaqib**, pp. 197-8/hadith 173; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 35:35-6/hadith 37.
2. Al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 35:18.
3. It means the master of the people.

of Aaron), *al-Murtada* (the divinely well-pleased), *Nafs al-Rasul* (the Messenger's self), *Akhu'l-Rasul* (the Messenger's brother), *Zawj al-Batul* (husband of the chaste lady), *Sayfullah al-Maslul* (the unsheathed sword of Allah), *Amir al-Bararah* (the commander of the pious),*Qatil al-Fajarah* (the slayer of the wicked), *Qasim al-Jannah wa'l-Nar* (the distributor of Paradise and Hellfire), *Sahib al-liwa'* (the standard-bearer),*Sayidal-'Arab* (the head of the Arabs), *Khasif al-Na'l* (the maker of the sandals), *kashshaf al-kurab* (the reliever from agonies), *al-Siddiq al-Akbar* (the grand veracious one), *Dhu'l-Qarnayn* (the two-horned), *al-Hadi* (the guide), *al-Faruq* (the distinguisher-between the right and the wrong), *al-Da'i* (the caller to God), *al-Shahid* (the witness), *Bab al-Madinah* (the door to the city-of knowledge), *al-Wali* (the assumer) *al-Wasi* (the successor to the Prophet),*Qadi dayni Rasulillah* (the settle of the debts of Allah's Messenger), *munjizu wa'dih* (the fulfiller of the pledges of Allah's Messenger), *al-Naba' al-'Azim* (the greatest news), *al-Sirat al-Mustaqim* (the straight path).[1]

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1. Ibn Shahr'ashub, **al-Manaqib** 3p.321-334, al-Irbali, **Kashf al-Ghummah** 1:66-70. 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas has reported that when the Holy Prophet (sawas) brought into fraternal association between each couple of Muslim individuals; one from the Muslims of Makkah who emigrated to Yathrib (i.e. Muhajirun) and another from Yathrib whose people supported and received the Holy Prophet (sawas) and the Muslims of Makkah (i.e. Ansar), he left Imam 'Ali (as) without appointing a brother for him. Imam 'Ali (as) therefore felt so angry that he left the crowds and came to sleep at the bank of a stream. The Holy Prophet (sawas) then came out looking for him. When he found him and said, "Stand up! Nothing befits you more than being Abu-Turab (the man with dust). You have been angry with me because I held fraternity ties between each couple of Muhajirun and Ansar and I did not hold fraternity ties between you and anyone else. Does it not please you that your standing to me is the same as (Prophet) Aaron's standing to (Prophet) Moses except that there will not be any prophet to come after me? Behold! He that loves you shall be surrounded by security and true faith, but he that hates you shall die the death of the infidels who did not accept Islam and shall be interrogated for the deeds he has done in Islam." For this reason, the title of Abu-Turab was the most lovable to Imam 'Ali (as), because it was the Holy Prophet (sawas) who chose it for him. (Reference: al-Haythami, **Majma' al-Zawa'id** 9:111; Ibn al-Sabbagh, **al-Fusul al-Muhimmah**, pp. 22.) [Translator].

As for Imam 'Ali's *kunyah*'s, some of them are as follows: *Abu'l-Hassan* (father of al-Hassan), *Abu'l-Hussain* (father of al-Hussain), *Abu'l-Sibtayn* (father of the two grandchildren of the Prophet), *Abu'l-Rayhanatayn* (father of the two basil-like sons), and *Abu-Turab* (the man with dust).

The Holy Prophet (sawas) Trains Imam 'Ali (as)

Although he lived with his wife in an isolated chamber, the Holy Prophet (sawas) very frequently visited the chamber of his uncle Abu-Talib where he met 'Ali (as). He surrounded him with his passionate feelings, encircled him with his care, bore him on his chest, moved his cradle so as to help him sleep quietly, illustrating so many aspects of care and supervision.[1]

It was actually one of the great, yet predetermined, favours and thankworthy graces of Allah the Almighty to 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib (as) that the people of Quraysh were afflicted by an unbearable famine at the time when Abu-Talib had too many children to nurture. Having noticed his uncle's difficulty in providing food for all of his children, the Holy Prophet (sawas) went to his uncle al-'Abbas, who was the wealthiest among the men of Banu-Hashim, and said to him: "*Your brother Abu-Talib has many children and you see what has befallen people because of this crisis. So, would you come with me and alleviate Abu-Talib's neediness by taking into our custody some of his children? I may take under my custody one and you take another. This way we can save him from the responsibility of sustaining them.*"

Having agreed to his nephew's suggestion, al-'Abbas, along with the Holy Prophet (sawas), visited Abu-Talib and offered to help him support his family members until that famine ended. Answering them, Abu-Talib said, "Leave 'Aqil to me and take whomever you want." Thus, the Holy Prophet (sawas) took the six-year old 'Ali (as) under his custody, while al-'Abbas took Ja'afar. 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib remained under the custody of the Holy Prophet (sawas) until Allah the Almighty ordered him to promulgate for the new religion. Ali (as) was, therefore, the first to follow and believe in the Holy Prophet (sawas). As for Ja'afar, he remained under the

1. **Bihar al-Anwar** 35-43.

custody of his uncle al-'Abbas until he embraced Islam and could manage his own affairs without the help of his uncle.[1]

After placing 'Ali (as) under his custody, the Holy Prophet (sawas) said, "I have chosen the one whom Allah has chosen to be my aide from amongst all of you."[2]

'Ali (as) had the opportunity of being guided under the wing of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sawas) from a tender age. Thus, he grew up under the shadow of the Holy Prophet's supreme and celestial moral standards. He drank from the fountains of the affection and tenderness of the Holy Prophet (sawas), who brought him up according to the teachings of his Lord, the Almighty. 'Ali (as) never departed the Holy Prophet (sawas).

Referring to the effects, scope, and profundity of the education he had received from his mentor and educator the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sawas), Imam 'Ali (as), in his famous speech known as *al-shaqshaqi'ah* (the disparaging) says:

Certainly, you all know my position of close kinship and special relationship with the Prophet of Allah (peace and blessing of Allah be upon him and his descendants). When I was only a child, he took charge of me. He used to press me to his chest and lay me beside him in his bed, bring his body close to mine and make me smell his smell. He used to chew something and then feed me with it. He found no lie in my speaking, nor weakness in any act. From the time of his weaning, Allah had put a mighty angel with him to take him along the path of high character and good behaviour through day and night, while I used to follow him like a young camel following in the footprints of its mother. Every day, he would show me in the form of a banner some of his high traits and commanded me to follow it. Every year, he used to go in seclusion

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1. Sheikh al-Saduq, **'Ilal al-Shara'i'** 1:169/hadith 1; al-Fattal al-Nayshaburi, **Rawdat al-Wa'izin**, pp. 86; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 38:237-8/hadith 8; Ibn Hisham, **al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah** 1:162; al-Hakim al-Nayshaburi, **al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn** 3:576; Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 2:58.
2. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 1:15 as quoted from (the books of) al-Buladhari and al-Isfahani.

to the hill ofira', where I saw him but no one else saw him. In those days Islam did not exist in any house except that of the Prophet of Allah (sawas) and Khadijah, while I was the third after these two. I used to see and watch the effulgence of divine revelation and message, and breathed the scent of Prophethood. When the revelation descended on the Prophet of Allah (sawas), I heard the moan of Satan. I said, "O Prophet of Allah, what is this moan?" He replied, "This is Satan who has lost all hope of being worshipped. O 'Ali, you see all that I see and you hear all that I hear, except that you are not a prophet; but you are a vicegerent and you are surely on (the path of) virtue."[1]

Second Stage: 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib from the Prophetic Mission to the Migration

1. Imam 'Ali; the first to believe in Allah's Messenger

The Holy Prophet (sawas) was brought up on divine supreme values, as is openly stated by the Holy Qur'an that reads:

﴿وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ﴾

"And you are surely on an excellent standard of character."[2]

He was thus contrary to the ordinary man of the Arabian Peninsula in belief, way of thinking, behaviour, and morality. Since his earliest youth, he adopted for himself a line of conduct that was parallel to the values contained by the messages of the prophets in general and that of Prophet Abraham the friend of God in particular. The Holy Prophet (sawas) was fully convinced that his line of conduct would never meet with the values of the pre-Islamic community. Based on this conclusion, the Holy Prophet (sawas) began to establish a model of a faithful family that was composed of Lady Khadijah, Imam 'Ali, and himself. In doing so he forced his way into history, opening a road in the midst of the general public's inclinations, using this small family model as a

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1. **Nahjul-Balaghah** 2:157-158/sermon 192, al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 14:475-476.
2. *Surat Al-Qalam, 68:4.*

form of resistance from the moral deviation so prevalent in that time. He also created a thunderous wave, with hopes that it would gradually transform into an overwhelming stream, sweeping away paganism and doctrinal ignorance forever.

Having been brought up in the lap of Muhammad the immaculate monotheist (sawas), 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib never prostrated himself before an idol at all and never ascribed partners to Allah in godhead. When the Divine Revelation was first sent to the Holy Prophet (sawas), Imam 'Ali(as) was sitting next to him; he therefore was the first person to believe in the message of the Holy Prophet, as is unanimously agreed upon by all Muslims.

In this regard, Anas ibn Malik says: "Prophethood was revealed to the Holy Prophet (sawas) on Monday, and 'Ali performed the (ritual) prayer on Tuesday."[1]

Salman al-Farisi (the Persian) is reported to have said: "The first person of this nation to join its Prophet at the Divine Pond shall be the first person to embrace Islam; namely, 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib."[2]

Al-'Abbas ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib is reported to have heard 'Umar ibn al-Khattab saying: "*You all should stop mentioning 'Ali except in a manner of compliment, for I have surely heard the Messenger of Allah (sawas) saying, ''Ali enjoys three characters…' If I—'Umar- had only one of these three, it would have been more delightful to*

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1. Ibn Shahr'ashub, **Manaqib Ali Abi-Talib** 2:21; al-Tabari, **Dhakha'ir al-'Uqba fi Manaqib Dhawi'l-Qurba**, pp. 59; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 38:203/hadith 1; al-Jahi, **al-'Uthmaniyyah**, pp. 291; al-Hakim al-Nayshaburi, **al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn** 3:112; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, **al-Isti'ab** 3:1095, No. 1855; Ibn 'Asakir, **Tarikh Madinat Dimashq** 42:29, No. 4933; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 4:119; Ibn Kathir, **al-Bidayah wa'l-Nihayah** 7:369.
2. Sulayman al-Kufi, **Manaqib al-Imam Amir al-Mu'minin** 1:263/hadith 175; Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari, **al-Mustarshid**, pp. 271/hadith 82; Sheikh al-Tusi, **al-Amali**, pp. 246/hadith 432; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 38:211/hadith 11; Ibn Shaybah, **al-Musannaf** 7:503/hadith 49; Ibn Abi-'Asim, **Kitab al-Awa'il**, pp. 35/hadith 67; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, **al-Isti'ab** 3:109, No. 1855; Ibn 'Asakir, **Tarikh Madinat Dimashq** 42:41, No. 4933; Ibn al-Athir, **Usd al-Ghabah** 4:17; al-Muttaqi al-Hindi, **Kanz al-'Ummal** 13:144/hadith36452.

me than possessing whatever is under sunlight. One day, in the presence of Abu-Bakr, Abu-'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrah, a group of the Holy Prophet's companions, and I, the Holy Prophet (sawas) put his hand on 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib's shoulder and said to him,

'O 'Ali, you are the first of all Muslims to embrace Islam; and you are the first of all believers to believe (in this religion); and your position to me is as same as (Prophet) Aaron's position to (Prophet) Moses. Liar indeed is he who claims that he loves me while he hates you."[1]

Although historians have unanimously agreed that Imam 'Ali (as) was the first to embrace Islam,[2]they have differed as in opinion as to how old he was when he making his declaration. In fact, to enter upon the issue of defining the age of Imam 'Ali (as) in regards to the time of embracing Islam is meaningless, because Imam 'Ali (as) was never non-Muslim and he never worshipped any other thing than Allah the Almighty. Referring to this fact, he himself said: "I was born on the natural religion." On account of this, scholars of Islamic heritage and history have unanimously agreed upon esteeming and showing consideration for this exceptional virtue by uttering the phrase of (*karramaallahu wajhahu)*; meaning, may Allah honour his face, whenever they mention Imam 'Ali (as). Thus, Islam found itself a spacious place in the depths of Imam 'Ali's heart, after he had been held close by the lap of the divine message, fed by the hand of Prophethood, and educated by the sublime morality of the Holy Prophet (sawas).

Speaking about Imam 'Ali (as), Mr. 'Abbas Mahmud al-'Aqqad wrote:

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1. Al-Irbali, **Kashf al-Ghummah** 1:85; Ibn al-Sabbagh, **al-Fusul al-Muhimmah**, pp. 119-20.
2. Some reference books that mention this fact are as follows: Sulayman al-Kufi: **Manaqib al-Imam Amir al-Mu'minin** 1:253/hadith 167 & 1:293/hadith 213; Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari, **al-Mustarshid**, pp. 478-9; al-Tabari, **Dhakha'ir al-'Uqba fi Manaqib Dhawi'l-Qurba**, pp. 58; **Tarikh al-Ya'qubi** 2:23; Ibn Sa'd, **al-Tabaqat al-Kubra** 3:21; **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:55; **al-Khatib al-Baghdadi** 4:456/hadith 2263; Ibn 'Asakir, **Tarikh Madinat Dimashq** 42:27, 31, 33, 36-7; Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 2:57-8; Ibn Kathir, **al-Bidayah wa'l-Nihayah** 3:34-7.

With full verification, Imam 'Ali (as) was born as Muslim, especially if we take into consideration the date of the birth of the Islamic faith and spirit. In fact, 'Ali (as) opened his eyes on Islam and he never saw idolatry, because he was brought up in the house wherefrom the Islamic mission launched. He had learnt worship of God from the prayer of the Holy Prophet and his chaste wife before he learnt it from the prayer of his father and mother.[1]

2. Imam 'Ali; the First to Pray

Imam 'Ali (as) witnessed all the vicissitudes that took place during the Holy Prophet’s (sawas) lifetime, and As considered the Holy Prophet to be the perfect model that satisfied all of his ambitions and geniuses;heused to imitate all of his deeds, observe all of his movements, pattern himself after his example, and obey him in all of his instructions and prohibitions before the Prophetic Mission up until thelast moment in his life. All historians have unanimously confirmed that Imam 'Ali (as) never refused to dorry out any of the Holy Prophet’s commands.

In one of his speeches, Imam 'Ali (as) stated that he was the first to perform the ritual prayer after the Holy Prophet (sawas), saying:

"No one preceded me in prayer (salat) except the Prophet."[2]

Habbah al-'Arani is reported to have said that he, one day, saw 'Ali (as) laughing so excessively that his molar teeth could be seen. He then prayed to God, saying:

"O Allah! I do not know any servant (of Yours) from this community who worshipped You earlier than I did, except the Prophet."[3]

In their commentary on of the Qur'anic verse:"

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1. 'Abbas Mahmud al-‘Aqad, **‘Abqariyat al-Imam ‘Ali**, pp. 23. In his encyclopaedic book of al-Ghadir 3:317-35, 'Allamah al-Amini mentions about 66 narrations on Imam 'Ali’s precedence to Islam over all other Muslims. He entitles this chapter of his book as: The Views of the Sahabah and the Tabi'un about the First to Embrace Islam.
2. **Nahj al-Balaghah**, 2:14/sermon 131.
3. Ibn'Asakir, **Tarikh Madinat Dimashq**, 42:32, Tarjamat Ali (as) no.4933.

﴿وَٱرۡكَعُواْ مَعَ ٱلرَّٰكِعِينَ﴾

"And bow down with those who bow down."[1]

Exegetes of the Holy Qur'an report 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas as saying, "This Qur'anic verse was revealed about the Messenger of Allah and about 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib, for these two were the first to establish the ritual prayer and to bow in worship."[2]

Anas ibn Malik is reported to have quoted the Holy Prophet (sawas) as saying:

"*The angels invoked Allah's blessings upon me and upon 'Ali for seven times, because the profession (of faith) that there is no god save Allah and that Muhammad is His servant and messenger was not raised to the heavens except by him and me.*"[3]

3. The First Congregational Prayer in Islam

In the beginning of his prophethood, whenever the Holy Prophet (sawas) wanted to perform the ritual prayer, he would go out to the valleys of Makkah stealthily and he would ask 'Ali (as) to accompany him. There, they would offer as many prayers as they wished. Upon accomplishment, they would come back to their place. They kept on this manner for a considerable while without letting Abu-Talib and their other uncles and cousins know about them. However, Abu-Talib someday could see both of them offering prayer; he therefore asked his nephew Muhammad (sawas) about the religion he was following. Answering his uncle, the Holy Prophet (sawas) said:

"This is the very faith of Allah, His angels, His messengers, especially our father Abraham. Allah has sent me as His prophet to convey this religion to His servants. As for you uncle, you are the

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1. *Surat Al-Baqarah, 2:43.*
2. Furat al-Kufi, **Tafsir**, pp. 59/hadith 20; al-Irbali, **Kashf al-Ghummah** 1:332; al-Hakim al-Hasakani, **Shawahid al-Tanzil** 1:111/hadith 124 & 125; al-Khawarizmi, **al-Manaqib**, pp. 280/hadith 274.
3. Sheikh al-Mufid, **Kitab al-Irshad** 1:30-31; Sharif al-Murtada, **al-Fusul al-Mukhtarah**, pp. 266, al-Hakim al-Hasakani, **Shawahid al-Tanzil** 2:185/hadith 819; al-Qanaduzi, **Yanabi' al-Mawaddah** 1:194/hadith 17.

worthiest of receiving my advice and my invitation to the true guidance, because you are the worthiest of accepting my invitation and helping me out in this affair."

'Ali (as) added: "*Father, I have believed in the Messenger of Allah, followed him, and joined him in prayer for Allah."*

Answering his son, Abu-Talib said: "*Most certainly, he (i.e. Muhammad) has invited you to nothing but utter righteousness; so, adhere to him firmly*."[1]

History has recorded another similar situation for al-'Abbas ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib, the Holy Prophet's paternal uncle. 'Afif al-Kindi reported the following:

Before the victory of Islam, I once came to Makkah to purchase some clothes and perfumes for my wife. I thus came to al-'Abbas ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib, who was a merchant, and sat with him while my eyes were focused on the Ka'bah. It was midday when a young man came, raised his sight towards the sky, and stood up facing the Ka'bah. Before long, a boy came and stood to the young man's right side. Then, a woman came and stood behind them. When the young man bowed, the boy and the woman bowed. When he raised his head, the boy and the woman did. When he prostrated, they also prostrated. Surprisingly, I said, "'Abbas, this is a marvellous thing. Is it not?" Al-'Abbas agreeing to my opinion said, "Yes, it is. It is indeed a marvellous thing. Do you know this young man?" As I answered negatively, al-'Abbas said, "This is Muhammad the son of 'Abdullah. He is my nephew. Do you know the boy? He is 'Ali my nephew. Do you know the woman? She is Khadijah the daughter of Khuwaylid, the young man's wife." I asked, "What are they doing?" Al-'Abbas answered, "They are performing prayer. My nephew claims that he is a prophet." He continued, "This young man, who is my nephew, has told me that his lord, the Lord of the Heavens and the Earth, has ordered him to follow this religion. I swear by God that none on this earth is following this

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1. Al-Tabari, **Dhakha'ir al-'Uqba**, pp. 60; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 38:322-3/hadith 33; Ibn Hisham, **al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah** 1:163; Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 2:58; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 13:199-200; al-Halabi, **al-Sirah al-Halabiyyah** 1:436.

religion except his wife and this boy. He claims that he shall seize the treasures of Caesar (the Roman emperor) and Khosrow (the Persian king)."[1]

After the blessed kernel of the Islamic nation had taken form, consisting of the Holy Prophet (sawas), Imam 'Ali (as), and Lady Khadijah the news of the new religion had begun to break out amongst the people of Quraysh; and those who Allah had guided to faith had come in successive groups to join Islam. The religion became increasingly stronger and a few years later it had turned into such a powerful entity that it could declare itself to the masses, having the ability to face challenges and fight its enemies for the sake of survival and beliefs. After all that, Allah the Almighty ordered His noble Prophet (sawas) to declare openly what he had been bidden to convey to people. Previously, when the Holy Prophet's followers and companions wanted to perform a prayer, they would set out stealthily to the valleys of Makkah. One day, a group of the polytheists, among whom were Abu-Sufyan ibnarb and al-Akhnas ibn Shurayq, caught sight of some of these followers; they therefore reviled and carped at them so intensely that a fight broke out between the two parties.[2]

4. Imam 'Ali at the Time of Declaring the Islamic Mission

The famous incident, known as (*hadith al-inthar*) the narration of warning, relates the meeting of the Holy Prophet's relatives at his house after he had invited them, so as to declare his prophethood and divine mission openly and to invite them to pay homage to and support him. The first to respond to the Holy Prophet's call from amongst his nearest relatives was Imam 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib (as). Exegetes of the Holy Qur'an and historiographers of Islam have mentioned that when the Holy Prophet (sawas) received this

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1. Al-Tabari, **Dhakha'ir al-'Uqba**, pp. 59; al-Irbali, **Kashf al-Ghummah** 1:82; al-Hilli, **al-'Udad al-Qawiyyah**, pp. 246/hadith 38; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, **al-Musnad** 1:209; al-Bukhari, **al-Tarikh al-Kabir** 7:74/hadith 341; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, **al-Isti'ab** 3:1096, No. 1855; al-Safadi, **al-Wafi bi'l-Wafiyyat** 20:58/hadith 87; al-Salihi al-Shami, **Subul al-Huda wa'l-Rashad** 2:297.
2. **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:61-2; Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 2:60.

Qur'anic verse, in which he was ordered to declare openly his mission:

﴿وَأَنذِرۡ عَشِيرَتَكَ ٱلۡأَقۡرَبِينَ﴾

"And warn the tribe of near kindred".[1]

He became extremely upset; because he already knew that the folks of Quraysh would oppose and envy him. However, he had to carry out this divine command. He therefore called 'Ali (as) to help him warn and convey the Lord’s message.

Let us read the whole story as reported by Imam 'Ali (as):

When the verse: ‘And warn your nearest relations,’ was revealed, the Holy Prophet (sawas) summoned me and said, ‘O 'Ali, Almighty Allah ordered me to warn my nearest relations, but I was depressed since I had realized that they would answer me disgracefully whenever I would call them to this matter. Hence, I tried to evade it until Archangel Gabriel came and threatened my Lord’s chastisement if I would not carry out. Now, I ask you to prepare some food on which you should cook a leg of a sheep and make us a skin of milk. Then, you should invite the sons of 'Abd al-Muttalib so that I will speak to them and convey this mission.’ I carried out the Holy Prophet’s orders completely and invited the sons of 'Abd al-Muttalib who were about forty men. Abu-Talib, amzah, al-'Abbas, and Abu-Lahab were also invited. As they all were present, the Holy Prophet asked me to serve them the food that I had prepared. With his teeth, he incised that piece of meat, threw its parts on the edges of that trencher, and said, ‘Here you are, by the Name of Allah.’ They all ate to excess. By Allah I swear, each one ate as much as I had cooked for all of them. Then, the Holy Prophet asked me to serve them with that milk. They all drank from that skin. I swear by Allah, each one drank full skin of milk. As soon as the Holy Prophet tried to speak, Abu-Lahab interrupted and said, ‘See how your man cast witchcraft on you.’ Therefore, they left before he could speak to them.

1. *Surat Al-Shurah, 26:214.*

The next day, the Holy Prophet said to me, 'You saw how that man interrupted me. Today, you should prepare food as same as you did yesterday and invite them again.' I did the same and invited them, and they came, ate and drank. The Holy Prophet then spoke, 'O sons of 'Abd al-Muttalib! By Allah, I do not know an Arab man who can bring to his people a matter better than what I am bearing to you. I am conveying to you the welfare of this world as well as the Hereafter. Almighty Allah has ordered me to invite you to this matter. Who will support me in this affair and he will be my brother, successor, and next-in-line amongst you?' I was the youngest among them when I shouted, 'O Messenger of Allah, I will be your supporter in this affair.'

Hence, the Holy Prophet grasped me from the neck and said, 'This is truly my brother, successor, and next-in-line amongst you. So, you must listen to and obey him.'

But they began to laugh at me, left the place, and said to my father, 'He has ordered you to listen to and obey your son!'[1]

In fact, that day should be regarded as the day of the open declaration for Islam, since it chronicled the beginning of a new stage in the life of the Holy Prophet and in the history of the Islamic propagation. This open declaration was characterized by mutual challenge, followed by a barefaced encounter between Islam and polytheism.

If you follow up the biography of the Holy Prophet (sawas) and have full acquaintance with all of its affairs and details since the beginning of the establishment of the Islamic government, the legislation of its laws, the organization of its affairs, and the developments of its events as dictated by the divine commands, you will come to know for sure that Imam 'Ali (as) supported the Holy Prophet (sawas) in all of his affairs and he was always his advocate against his enemies, his arm with which he defended himself, struck his enemies, and built the Islamic nation and state,

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1. Sheikh al-Tusi, **al-Amali**, pp. 582-3/hadith 1206; Furat al-Kufi, **Tafsir**, pp. 300-301/hadith 404; **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:62-; Al-Hakim al-asakani, **Shawahid al-Tanzil** 1/486/hadith 514; **Tafsir al-Baghawi** 3:400; Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh**,2:62-63.

and the second-in-command up to the termination of the blessed lifetime of the Holy Prophet (sawas).

The launch day of the public declaration of Islam was the first day of warning against defying the final religion of Allah and the first day of the spreading of Islam to the entire globe. No one supported the Holy Prophet (sawas) like 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib and he was a perfect representative with his true and genuine feelings, his constant struggle that manifested in him and the gallant self-sacrifice for Islam.

Imam 'Ali; From the Start of the Divine Message to the Blessed Migration

The polytheists of Quraysh failed to stop the surge of propagation for Islam, as well as prevent the Holy Prophet (sawas) from promulgating for it and guiding to Islam. All of their plots and conspiracies crashed and all their tools and threats fell short, because Abu-Talib was the impervious refuge of the Holy Prophet (sawas). He did not stop defending him against the harm and tyranny of the people of Quraysh. The polytheists of Quraysh were continually inventing new ways in which to harm the Holy Prophet (sawas). This particular time, they resorted to a means of cowardice that expressed the scope of their rancour and weakness, using children to molest and throw stones at the Holy Prophet (sawas). Here came the crucial role of - the young Hashimite boy - 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib, because it was inappropriate for an old man – like Abu-Talib, who was the sage chief of the Hashimites - to chase young boys. Thus, 'Ali chased the unruly boys who lay in wait for the Holy Prophet (sawas), defending him against them.[1]

5. Imam 'Ali Risked His Life for the Holy Prophet at Col Abu-Talib

When Islam rapidly circulated in Makkah, transforming it into a strong entity, it robbed the polytheists of sleep as they saw it as a big threat and danger to their interests. They, therefore, resorted to methods of deception and physical persecution, as an attempt to mute the thunderous voice of Muhammad (sawas). As they

1. Sheikh al-Mufid, **al-Ikhtisas**, pp. 146.

unsheathed the swords of transgression, Abu-Talib, on the other side, did not hesitate to protect the Holy Prophet (sawas), because Abu-Talib had an honourable prestige, awe, and standing in the eyes of the chiefs of the polytheists of Quraysh. So long as Abu-Talib sided with him, they did not have the courage to assault the Holy Prophet (sawas), because if they did so publicly, it would have led to an open encounter with Abu-Talib and all of the Hashimites (i.e. the descendants of Hashim). Of course, the polytheists of Quraysh would not be able to enter into such an encounter, because this would cost them dearly. For this reason, the polytheists of Quraysh wreaked their wrath upon the downtrodden Muslims; namely, the slaves and the poor. They thus made them suffer various kinds of physical torture and persecution, so as to force them to give up their faith and adherence to the Holy Prophet (sawas). However, the response of these fresh Muslims was nothing but steadfastness, firmness, insistence on Islam, and relentless commitment to the message and path of Islam. The Holy Prophet (sawas) then saw that the best solution for redeeming the weaker Muslims from such oppression was their exodus from Makkah to Abyssinia (currently Ethiopia).[1]

In this way, the Muslims remaining in Makkah were the prominent and leading personalities. Of course, any bloody encounter with these persons was improbable; therefore, the polytheists of Quraysh had no other option but to resort to an action that would reduce the force of the Holy Prophet's position and, at the same time, cancel any opportunity of armed conflict. As a consequence, the polytheists of Quraysh decided to impose a social and economic blockade on the Hashimites, because they were the protective force that defended the Holy Prophet (sawas) against the violence of the people of Quraysh. As a consequence, a cold war broke out between the polytheists of Makkah and the Hashimites.

The Banu-Hashim and the other Muslims gathered in Col Abu-Talib, as all means of protection was more readily available to them there in comparison to any other locations. Besides, it was

1. Ibn Hisham, **al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah** 1:213.

possible to establish defensive lines in that region, so as to hold off any aggressive raids waged by the polytheists of Quraysh.[1]

For more precaution and care for procuring the Holy Prophet's safety, Abu-Talib ordered his son 'Ali to swap places with the Holy Prophet (sawas) by sleeping in his bed at night while the Holy Prophet (sawas) slept elsewhere, in order to save the Holy Prophet (sawas) from any attempt of assassination made by the enemies breaking into the col.[2]As for Imam 'Ali (as), he always hurried to carry out his father's orders and therefore spent these nights bravely sleeping in the place of the Holy Prophet (sawas), risking his life for the divine message and its conveyor.

Imam 'Ali's (as) bravery did not end with this risk; rather, he frequently entered the city of Makkah stealthily at night to bring food to the besieged persons,[3] who were suffering from such serious famine, that they, for some days, had nothing to eat but grass.

Needless to say, it was not possible for everybody to do such heroic deeds during this crucial time; rather, such deeds required one who had a steady heart, a courageous spirit, a faith-based consciousness, and wholehearted devotion to the Holy Prophet (sawas). Such a person was namely 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib (as), who spent in that desolated land a part of the bloom of his youth, because he was besieged in this place at just seventeen years of age, leaving when he became twenty. However, it was a new life experiment that helped him bravely face all risks, qualified him to receive all emergencies, urgent situations, and gross missions audaciously, raised his affiliation with the Holy Prophet (sawas), and accustomed him to patience, obedience, and self-denial for the sake of Almighty Allah and the Holy Prophet (sawas).

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1. Ibn Hisham, **al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah** 1:34; **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:74; Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 2:87; Ibn Kathir, **al-Bidayah wa'l-Nihayah** 3:105.
2. Al-Fattal al-Nayshaburi, **Rawdat al-Wa'izin**, pp. 54; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 14:64. **Rawdha Al-wa'adhin** p. 54.
3. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 13:256.

6. Imam 'Ali Accompanied the Holy Prophet to al-Ta'if

After the passing away of Abu-Talib, throbbing incidents accumulated against the Holy Prophet (sawas), and the people of Quraysh intensified their enmity and harm against him, because his only defender and supporter had passed away and the people of Quraysh had no one else to fear or respect. In reference to this fact, the Holy Prophet (sawas) said:

"The people of Quraysh could not harm me until Abu-Talib passed away."[1]

The new situation required that the Holy Prophet (sawas) change his place of residence to a more secure one, in order to use it as the centre of promulgation for Islam in the Arab Peninsula and the world. He therefore started to ask the tribes to adopt his issue and defend him while at the same time, he propagated for the new religion, beginning with the tribes of al-Ta'if. Although he stayed there for ten days, the tribes of Thaqif did not respond to him; rather, they induced their boys, servants, and slaves to throw stones at him. 'Ali (as), along with Zaid ibnHarithah, stood in front of the Holy Prophet (sawas) in order to protect him, receiving the stones instead, while preventing the boys from assaulting him. 'Ali (as) and Zaid were heavily wounded and some of the stones also hit the Holy Prophet (sawas), causing his legs to bleed.[2]

It is also reported that the Holy Prophet (sawas) made many other journeys to the various Arab tribes, asking them for protection, so that he would be able to promulgate for Islam. During all of these journeys, no one accompanied him except 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib (as), who was present with him on all of his journeys to the tribes of Banu-'Amir ibn Sa'sa'ah, Rabi'ah, and Banu-Shayban.[3]

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1. Al-Irbali, **Kashf al-Ghummah** 1:16; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 22:530; Yahya ibn Mu'in, **Tarikh Ibn Mu'in** 1:38; Ibn 'Asakir, **Tarikh Madinat Dimashq** 66:339; Ibn Kathir, **al-Bidayah wa'l-Nihayah** 3:164-165.
2. Al-Tabarsi, **I'lam al-Wara bi-A'lam al-Huda** 1:134-5; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 4:127-128.
3. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 4:125-126.

7. Imam 'Ali and the Second 'Aqabah Homage

When the historical agreement of acknowledgement of allegiance was struck between the foremost Muslims of Yathrib and their honest leader the Holy Prophet (sawas), a secret meeting was held between the two parties in the house of 'Abd al-Muttalib. In this meeting, Hamzah, al-'Abbas[1], and Imam 'Ali (as) took the Holy Prophet's side and the homage was accomplished in the best manner.

Arrangements were made so that news of the secret meeting would remain unknown to the polytheists, and so the meeting was held without letting anyone, including the other Muslims, know about it. Nevertheless, the news of the meeting reached the polytheists who, carrying weapons, came to the place of the meeting in discovery of the matter; however, Hamzah and Imam 'Ali (as), were also armed and faced them bravely. When they asked Hamzah about the matter, he denied it totally, and so, the polytheists returned frustrated.

The presence of Imam 'Ali (as) at this important historical event, proves that he had a crucial role in the most important moments of the Holy Prophet's propagation for Islam and in the history of the Islamic mission, because he provided the Muslims of Yathrib with a very clear picture about the Holy Prophet and the protection of Banu-Hashim. Thus, they became surer and more confident of the new religion and the Islamic mission.

The Holy Prophet (sawas) sought the help of the most courageous men of Banu-Hashim, and this was indeed a successfully managed and felicitous plan, because the two particular persons chosen were known for their strength and inflexibility in procuring a sufficient amount of protection for the Holy Prophet (sawas) and the Islamic mission.

8. Imam 'Ali and the First Fraternity Bond

It has been reported that when the Holy Prophet (sawas) declared the 'fraternal association' and 'brotherhood deal' between his

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1. Al-Tabarsi, **I'lam al-Wara bi-A'lam al-Huda** 1:142; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 19:12/hadith 1.

companions, he introduced Abu-Bakr with 'Umar, and 'Uthman with 'Abd al-Rahman ibn 'Awf, but he left 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib without a partner. Upon seeing this, 'Ali said,

"O Allah's Messenger! Indeed, after what I saw you do to all of your companions except me, my soul left my body and I felt as if my back was broken. If you have done so because you are wrathful with me, then you have all the right to blame me and I will accept it."

Answering him, the Holy Prophet (sawas) said:

"I swear by Him who has sent me with the truth; I have delayed you for no other reason than saving you for myself. Your position to me is as same as (Prophet) Aaron's position to (Prophet) Moses, except that no prophet shall come after me. You are my brother and my heir."

'Ali (as) asked:

"*What kind of inheritance do I inherit from you?"*

The Holy Prophet (sawas) answered:

"You will inherit what the prophets who came before me bequeathed; namely, the Book of their Lord and the traditions of their Prophet. Besides, you shall be with me in my palace in Paradise."[1]

9. Imam 'Ali Sacrifices his Soul for the Holy Prophet at the Night of Migration

After the Holy Prophet (sawas) concluded a treaty with the tribes of al-Awes and al-Khazraj, known as the Second 'Aqabah Homage,[2]Islam spread in Yathrib, due to the efforts of elite heralds who were sincere and ready to sacrifice everything for the sake of

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1. Sulayman al-Kufi, **Manaqib al-Imam Amir al-Mu'minin** 1:316-7/hadith 236; al-Irbali, **Kashf al-Ghummah** 1:333-4; Ibn 'Asakir, **Tarikh Madinat Dimashq** 21:415-6 & 42:52-3; Ibn al-Bitriq, **al-'Umdah**, pp. 167/hadith 257; al-Zarandi, **Nazm Durar al-Simtayn**, pp. 94-5; al-Muttaqi al-Hindi, **Kanz al-'Ummal** 0:167/hadith 25554 & 13:105/hadith 36345.
2. Ibn Hisham, **al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah** 2:299; Ibn 'Asakir, **Tarikh Madinat Dimashq** 11:218; Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 2:98.

Allah and the spreading of the teachings of Islam. This was the starting point of the international promulgation for Islam, the greatest step on the path of building a faithful community, and the initial stage where Islam opened up for the Arabs outside of Makkah. Ever since this time, Muslims had a secure meeting place and an important central station to crystallize the cultural and educational activities of Islam and disseminate the divine mission in the community of the Arabian Peninsula.

When the tyrannical polytheists of Quraysh went too far in harming and pressurizing the Muslims in order to force them into abandoning the religion of Islam and prevented them from supporting of the Holy Prophet (sawas); and when their arrogance in the persecution of the Muslims exceeded all bounds, the Holy Prophet (sawas) ordered his followers to migrate to Yathrib, saying:

"Verily, Allah has chosen for you an abode where you will be secure and chosen of your brethren."[1]

Complying with the Holy Prophet's order, Muslims secretly fled Makkah in small groups and in scattered batches so that the polytheists of Quraysh would not see them.

The Holy Prophet (sawas) had to undergo unbearable suffering and all sorts of pressure including accusations of lying and threats from friends and foes alike. Expressing his experience of sufferings, he said:

"No prophet had ever been harmed as much as I have for the sake of Allah."[2]

Despite all that, the Holy Prophet's hope for victory against the enemies and success in conveying the Islamic message never weakened, and his ultimate trust in Allah was always more effective than all of the plots and conspiracies of the polytheists of Quraysh. Having realized all these factors of steadfastness and

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1. Ibn Shahr'ashub, **Manaqib Ali Abi-Talib** 1:233; Ibn Hatam al-'Amili, **al-Durr al-Nazim**, pp. 114; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 19:26/hadith 15.
2. Abu-Na'im al-Isfahani, **Hilyat al-Awliya'** 6:333; al-Muttaqi al-Hindi, **Kanz al-'Ummal** 3:130/hadith 5818.

power enjoyed by the Holy Prophet (sawas), his enemies anticipated the dangers that would afflict them in the coming years if the Holy Prophet (sawas) joined his followers and took on Yathrib as his headquarters and base for the promulgation of his mission. They began to prepare to stop him and planned for his annihilation before it was too late. Their plan was on condition that neither an individual or specific tribe would be directly responsible for his murder. The philosophy behind this condition was that neither Banu-Hashim nor Banu-'Abd al-Muttalib could take revenge, as it would be impossible to accuse all of the tribes, who were involved in killing the Prophet (sawas). As such, they (the Prophet's relatives) would not be able to retaliate for the bloodshed of their cousin. In this event, Banu-Hashim would have to accept blood-money or another peaceful solution, in avoidance of a 'blood-for-blood' vengeance.

The chiefs of the polytheists of Quraysh held a meeting in the so-called *dar al-nidwah* (House of Consultation) and every person in attendance expressed an opinion. They all agreed that they should choose a tough, famous young man from every tribe, give each one a sharp sword, order them all to perform a raid and assassinate the Holy Prophet (sawas) in his own house with one strike only, so the direct assassinator would not be distinguished.

When deciding which night they would implement their devilish plot, the Archangel Gabriel came to the Holy Prophet (sawas) and informed him of their plan. He thus ordered him not to spend that night in his house and not to sleep on his bed; rather, he should flee his homeland. Having received this news, the Holy Prophet (sawas) conveyed the information to Imam 'Ali (as) and ordered him to spend the night of assassination in the Prophet's house and to sleep on the bed on which the Prophet used to sleep, while the Prophet travelled towards Yathrib. Moreover, the Holy Prophet (sawas) entrusted Imam 'Ali (as) with the job of fulfilling his promises and giving back what was deposited with him to their owners. Finally, the Holy Prophet (sawas) said to him:

"*Once you finish doing what I have ordered you to do, you must ready yourself for migration to Allah and His Messenger. As soon as you receive a letter from me, you must begin your journey.*"[1]

Here Imam 'Ali's courage, selflessness, and self-sacrifice weremanifested, and when he received the Holy Prophet's command, he accepted it with a faithful heart and steady soul. His tranquillity portrayed the most perfect image of ultimate obedience to the Prophet in fulfilling tasks, conscious submission to the leader and great sacrifice for the sake of the religion and its valued principles.

The answer of Imam 'Ali (as) was: *"O Allah's Messenger! Will you escape danger if I sacrifice my life for you?" "Yes, I will." the Holy Prophet (sawas) answered, "Such has my Lord promised me."*

Upon hearing this reply, Imam 'Ali (as) smiled and fell to the ground, prostrating himself before Allah as an expression of thanks and gratitude for the safety of the Holy Prophet (sawas). Then, the Holy Prophet (sawas) held him close and wept in fondness of him. 'Ali (as) also wept to know that the Holy Prophet (sawas) would leave him.[2]

When night fell, 'Ali (as) wore the garment of the Holy Prophet (sawas) that he used to wear for sleep, and lay down on the bed with equanimity and determination. He was cheerful that the Holy Prophet (sawas) had chosen him for this mission and happy that the Prophet would be saved. The wicked youths of Quraysh came while evil filled their minds and overtopped their swords. They surrounded the house from every side, peering through the opening of the door at the place where the Holy Prophet (sawas) would sleep. As they saw a body sleeping there, and assumed it was the Prophet (sawas), they thought their plan was going well. At the last third of the night, the Holy Prophet (sawas) left his house, as he was hiding in one of its corners, and headed for Cave Thawr where

1. Sheikh al-Tusi, **al-Amali**, pp. 468/hadith 1031; al-Irbali, **Kashf al-Ghummah** 2:33; Ibn al-Sabbagh, **al-Fusul al-Muhimmah**, p. 46.
2. Ibn Shahr'ashub, **Manaqib** 1:233; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 19:60/hadith 18.

he resided for some time so that he could resume his blessed journey to Yathrib thereafter.

When the hour of implementing the devilish plan came, the youths, headed by Khalid ibn al-Walid, raided the house. Once Imam 'Ali (as) heard a noise, he jumped from the bed, took his sword, and attacked the assassins. Startled, they ran away and left the house in a hurry. When they asked him about the Prophet, he answered: *"I do not know where he went."*[1]

Thereby, Allah the Almighty decided to keep His Prophet safe and grant him success in his mission of promulgating Islam.

Through such a great attitude, courageous intrepidity, and unprecedented manner, Imam 'Ali (as) invented the course of self-sacrifice and self-ransoming and taught all revolutionists and all those who adopted the path of struggle for the sake of principles and faith how to risk their souls for the sake of revolution and reformation. 'Ali's one and only aim was to please his Lord, procure the safety of the Holy Prophet (sawas), and promulgate his blessed mission. Praising and immortalizing 'Ali's self-denial, the Divine Revelation reads:

﴿وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَشۡرِي نَفۡسَهُ ٱبۡتِغَآءَ مَرۡضَاتِ ٱللَّهِۗ وَٱللَّهُ رَءُوفُۢ بِٱلۡعِبَادِ﴾

"And of mankind is he who would sell himself, seeking the pleasure of

1. A large number of historiographers and narrators have related the story of Imam 'Ali's spending the night of assassination in the Holy Prophet's house, yet in different ways, both lengthy and brief. Some of the reference books that related the story are as follows: Sheikh al-Tusi, **al-Amali**, pp. 436/hadith 1031; al-Tabarsi, **I'lam al-Wara bi-A'lam al-Huda** 1:45; Ibn Shahr'ashub, **Manaqib** 2:68; al-Irbali, **Kashf al-Ghummah** 2:29-33; Ibn Sa'd, **al-Tabaqat al-Kubra** 1:227-8; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, **al-Musnad** 1:331; **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:98-9; al-Hakim al-Nayshaburi, **al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn** 3:2-4; Ibn al-Sabbagh al-Maliki, **al-Fusul al-Muhimmah**, pp. 44-6. The same story, whose authenticity is an object of unanimity among all Muslims, is included with the incident of the Holy Prophet's migration to Yathrib in all of reference books of Islamic history.

Allah; and Allah hath compassion on (His) bondmen." [1]

Pride in Imam 'Ali's Self-Sacrifice

Actually, Imam 'Ali's act of self-sacrifice when replacing the Holy Prophet (sawas) and spending that night in his bed, in order to trick the assassinators and have them believe that the Holy Prophet (sawas) was still there, was an utter disappointment to the aggressors of Quraysh. This act thwarted all of their expectations, destroying their plan to assassinate the Holy Prophet (sawas). It also grieved Satan and gave a boost to the belief in Islam. In fact, no other self-sacrificial act can be seen as being more important or better in sincerity in results and rewards than that one of Imam 'Ali (as). With greater reason, Allah the Almighty took pride in this act before all of His angels. A narration reads:

At the night when Imam 'Ali (as) replaced the Holy Prophet (sawas) and spent that night on his bed, Almighty Allah revealed to Archangels Gabriel and Michael, saying, "Today, I have established brotherhood between you two and I have extended your lives, one longer than the other. Of the two of you, which one will sacrifice his life for the sake of the other?" Both of them said that they loved their lives and refused to part with their life for the sake of the other. Then, Almighty Allah revealed, "Will you both not be like 'Ali whom I made Muhammad's brother and he preferred the Prophet's life to his own and slept on the Prophet's bed exposing himself to the risk of being mistaken to be the Prophet and thus slain? Go down on earth and protect him from the mischief of his enemies." Archangel Gabriel stood at the head and Archangel Michael stood at the foot of the bed, even as 'Ali ('a) slept on the Prophet's bed. They said, "Congratulations! Who can be like you,

1. *Surat Al-Baqarah, 2:207*. **Tafsir al-'Ayashi** 1:101/hadith 292; **Tafsir al-Qummi** 1:71; **Tafsir Furat al-Kufi**, pp. 65; al-Tusi, **al-Tibyan** 2:183; Ibn Hamzah al-Tusi, **al-Thaqib fi'l-Manaqib**, pp. 146/hadith 137; **Tafsir al-Tha'labi** 2:125-6; al-Hakim al-Hasakani, **Shawahid al-Tanzil**, pp. 127-8/hadith 137; **Tafsir al-Qurtubi** 2:21; Abu-Hayyan al-Andalusi, **Tafsir al-Bahr al-Muhit** 2:127.

O son of Abu-Talib. Allah from the height of seven skies is taking pride in you before His angels!"[1]

10. Imam 'Ali's Missions Following the Self-Sacrifice Night

In the dawning of the first day of the Holy Prophet's blessed migration, divine peace and tranquillity encompassed him with each step he made towards Yathrib, the new capital of the Islamic mission. The murky night slipped by, sweeping away with it every adversity in store for 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib (sawas) without exposing his life to danger or misfortune. 'Ali knew how to fulfil the mission perfectly, as he was highly disciplined, accurate, and mindful in the implementation.

There were still missions needing to be implemented by 'Ali (as), as nobody else was fit enough to carry them out. He had to give back the depositories to the owners who had kept them with the Holy Prophet (sawas). Although they were polytheists, these people trusted the honesty, faithfulness, and sincerity of the Holy Prophet (sawas), who was well-known for his honesty and faithfulness among the people of Quraysh and Arabs who visited Makkah and was nicknamed *al-Sadiq al-Amin*; meaning, the honest and trustworthy. Of course, the Holy Prophet (sawas) was too honest to break his pledges or misappropriate things entrusted to him. Although the surrounding circumstances were so hard and dangerous that the Holy Prophet (sawas) was threatened with death and the time being so crucial, possibly causing one to lose one's mind, the Holy Prophet (sawas) did not forget to commission the task returning things that had been entrusted to him to their owners. 'Ali - as the Prophet (sawas) saw him - was the best man to perform the task. No one was more suitable than 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib, because he had more knowledge of the affairs of the Holy Prophet (sawas) than any other person. He knew those who had deposited their properties with the Holy Prophet (sawas), and he was the strongest and the most trustworthy of all.

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1. Al-Qada al-Maghribi, **Sharh al-Akhbar** 2:409/hadith 754; Sheikh al-Tusi, **al-Amali**, pp. 469/hadith 1031; Ibn Shahr'ashub, **Manaqib** 2:77; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 19:85/hadith 36; **Tafsir al-Tha'labi** 2:126; al-Hakim al-Hasakani, **Shawahid al-Tanzil**, pp. 123/hadith 133; Ibn al-Athir, **Usd al-Ghabah** 4:25; Ibn al-Sabbagh, **al-Fusul al-Muhimmah**, pp. 4.

After 'Ali (as) had transferred the deposits to their owners, he stopped by the Holy Ka'bah and raised his voice saying these words: *"O people! Is there among you anyone who had deposited anything with the Messenger of Allah? Is there among you anyone who had kept anything with the Messenger of Allah? Is there among you anyone who had been promised of anything by the Messenger of Allah?" When 'Ali (as) made sure that no one would come to him demanding anything from the Holy Prophet (sawas) after he had stayed in Makkah for three days, he decided to join the Holy Prophet (sawas)*.[1]

11. Imam Ali's Migration to Yathrib

Peacefully, the Holy Prophet (sawas) arrived in Quba, a place near Yathrib, where he was received by groups of his supporters. From that place, he sent a message to Ali (as), ordering him to move quickly and join him. When the Holy Prophet's message was passed over to Ali by Abu-Waqid al-Laythi, he bought the required provision and camels for the journey and prepared himself to leave. He then ordered the rest of the weak Muslims, who could not yet flee, to sneak into Dhu-Tuwa, a place near Makkah, by nightfall and carry with them the lightest of their possessions. This was the beginning of the third tiresome mission of Imam Ali (as); namely, leading the Muslim women to Yathrib. He thus left Makkah in the company of the women of Banu-Hashim, all of whom were named Fatimah: namely, Lady Fatimah the daughter of the Holy Prophet (sawas), Lady Fatimah bint Asad, Imam Ali's mother, Fatimah the daughter of al-Zubair ibn abd al-Muttalib, and Fatimah the daughter ofHamzah ibn abd al-Muttalib. Ayman - the servant of the Holy Prophet (sawas) and Abu-Waqid al-Laythi followed them. The mission of driving the camels was first given to Abu-Waqid, who led the camels too fast, as he feared lest the enemies would catch them. It was difficult for Imam Ali (as) to see the women of Banu-Hashim in such a state of exhaustion and pain because of the rapid movement of the camels; he therefore said to Abu-Waqid, "Be lenient toward these women. They are too weak to stand that." Then, Imam Ali (as) drove the riding

1. Ibn Shahr'ashub, **Manaqib** 2:58; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 38:389/hadith 1; al-Mas'udi, **Muruj al-Dhahab** 2:279.

camels gently. In order to spread tranquillity and calm upon those who were with him, he went on chanting this couplet:

"Nothing shall come to pass except that which Allah wants.

So, trust Him and think well of Him.

If you do, He, the Lord of humankind,

shall inevitably release you from what has upset you."

While Ali (as) was reciting this poetry he managed to create such a great feeling ofpeace and tranquillity, as he continued to ride, quietly leading the caravan until he was about to enter a village there called Dajnan when the troops the polytheists of Quraysh had sent to arrest him and his companions to return them to Makkah overtook them. The troop was composed of seven veiled horsemen, among whom was Janah, a servant ofHarb ibn Umayyah. Imam Ali (as) ordered Ayman and Abu-Waqid to make the camels kneel down and to shackle them. He then came forward and helped the women from the camels. Unsheathing his sword, he faced the horsemen who said to him, "O faithless! Did you think that you, along with these women, would escape us? Go back home! Curse your father!" "What if I refuse to go back?" asked them Ali (as) mockingly. With intensifying fury and rage, they shouted at him, "You will come back with us against your will or we will go back carrying your hairiest organ (i.e. the head), and it will be very easy for us to see you dead."

Some of the horsemen tried to move toward the camels and frighten them so that the women would be afraid and terrified, but Ali (as) prevented them from doing so. Janah then ran toward Imam Ali (as) and tried to strike him with his sword, but the Imam evaded him and struck him with his sword on his shoulders with such a swift strike that it halved his body from top to toe until the strike reached the shoulder of his horse. On foot, Ali (as) then raided on the rest of the horsemen who absconded fearful and terrified. From a remote distance, they said to Imam Ali (as), "Son of Abu-Talib! Withhold yourself from us!" Addressing them, he said, "I am leaving to meet my brother and cousin; the Messenger of Allah. If any one of you is pleased that I will squeeze his flesh and shed his blood, then he may move toward me!" Upon hearing these words, the horsemen ran away disappointed.

Imam Ali (as) then turned his face toward Ayman and Abu-Waqid and asked them to untie the riding animals. Thus, the caravan walked peacefully until they arrived in Dajnan where they resided for a day and a night until a group of weak Muslims joined them. Imam Ali (as) and the ladies of Banu-Hashim spent that night praying and celebrating the praises of Allah, standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides up until the rise of dawn. Imam Ali (as) then led them in the congregational Prayer of Dawn. Upon accomplishment, he set out and travelled through the quarters while uttering continuously the praises of Allah until they reached Yathrib.

Before they reached their destination, the Divine Revelation had revealed to the Holy Prophet (sawas) the story of their journey and foretold of the great reward that Allah the Almighty had decided for them:

﴿ٱلَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ ٱللَّهَ قِيَـٰمًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِى خَلْقِ ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَـٰذَا بَـٰطِلًا سُبْحَـٰنَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿١٩١﴾ رَبَّنَآ إِنَّكَ مَن تُدْخِلِ ٱلنَّارَ فَقَدْ أَخْزَيْتَهُۥ ۖ وَمَا لِلظَّـٰلِمِينَ مِنْ أَنصَارٍ ﴿١٩٢﴾ رَّبَّنَآ إِنَّنَا سَمِعْنَا مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِى لِلْإِيمَـٰنِ أَنْ ءَامِنُوا۟ بِرَبِّكُمْ فَـَٔامَنَّا ۚ رَبَّنَا فَٱغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَكَفِّرْ عَنَّا سَيِّـَٔاتِنَا وَتَوَفَّنَا مَعَ ٱلْأَبْرَارِ ﴿١٩٣﴾ رَبَّنَا وَءَاتِنَا مَا وَعَدتَّنَا عَلَىٰ رُسُلِكَ وَلَا تُخْزِنَا يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ ۗ إِنَّكَ لَا تُخْلِفُ ٱلْمِيعَادَ ﴿١٩٤﴾ فَٱسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ أَنِّى لَآ أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَـٰمِلٍ مِّنكُم مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَىٰ ۖ بَعْضُكُم مِّنۢ بَعْضٍ ۖ فَٱلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا۟ وَأُخْرِجُوا۟ مِن دِيَـٰرِهِمْ وَأُوذُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِى وَقَـٰتَلُوا۟ وَقُتِلُوا۟ لَأُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِهِمْ وَلَأُدْخِلَنَّهُمْ جَنَّـٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَـٰرُ ثَوَابًا مِّنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عِندَهُۥ حُسْنُ ٱلثَّوَابِ﴾

"Such as remember Allah, standing, sitting, and reclining, and consider the creation of the heavens and the earth, (and say): Our Lord! Thou created not this in vain. Glory be to Thee! Preserve us

from the doom of Fire.Our Lord! Whom Thou causes to enter the Fire: him indeed Thou hast confounded. For evil-doers there will be no helpers. Our Lord! Lo! we have heard a crier calling unto Faith: "Believe ye in your Lord!" So we believed. Our Lord! Therefore forgive us our sins, and remit from us our evil deeds, and make us die the death of the righteous. Our Lord! And give us that which Thou hast promised to us by Thy messengers. Confound us not upon the Day of Resurrection. Lo! Thou break not the tryst. And their Lord hath heard them (and He said): Lo! I suffer not the work of any worker, male or female, to be lost. Ye proceed one from another. So those who fled and were driven forth from their homes and suffered damage for My cause, and fought and were slain, verily I shall remit their evil deeds from them and verily I shall bring them into Gardens underneath which rivers flow - A reward from Allah. And with Allah is the fairest of rewards." [1]

During this period, the Holy Prophet (sawas) resided in Quba in the quarter of Amr ibn Awf. Although he stayed there for more than ten days, he performed all of the ritual prayers in the shortened form. Every day, the people of the quarter asked him whether he would reside there so that they would build a house and a mosque for him, but his answer was always: "No, I will not. I am just waiting for Ali ibn Abi-Talib, since I had ordered him to join me. I will not settle at any house before Ali comes to me. God willing, he will very soon join me."[2]

Ali (as) finally arrived there and joined the Holy Prophet (sawas). His feet were split due to excessive walking and hot weather. As soon as the Holy Prophet (sawas) noticed what had happened to his feet, he wept in sympathy for him. He then rubbed his hand over Ali's feet, thereafter, Ali did not feel anymore pain in his feet.[3]

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1. *Surat Al-Imran, 3:191-195*. **al-Amali** for Sheikh al-Tusi, pp. 470-1/hadith 1031 and al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 19:64-7/hadith 18.
2. Al-Kulayni, **al-Kafi** 8:339/hadith 536; Hassan ibn Sulayman al-Hilli, **Mukhtasar Basa'ir al-Darajat**, pp. 129; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 19:115/hadith 2.
3. Sulayman al-Kufi, **Manaqib al-Imam Amir al-Mu'minin** 1:436/hadith 292; al-Tabarsi, **I'lam al-Wara bi-A'lam al-Huda** 1:357; al-Halabi, **al-Sirah al-Halabiyyah** 2:233.

The Holy Prophet (sawas), accompanied by Imam Ali (as), changed his dwelling from Quba to the quarter of Salim ibn Awf, where he delineated a mosque for the inhabitants of that quarter and showed them the direction to be followed in prayers. In that place, the Holy Prophet (sawas) led them in a two-unit prayer and then delivered two speeches. On that very day, he left for Yathrib, riding on his mule that carried him from Makkah. Ali (as) was always with him; he stopped when the Holy Prophet (sawas) stopped, and walked when he walked. Finally, the Holy Prophet (sawas), accompanied by Ali (sawas), resided for some time in the house of Abu-Ayyub al-Ansari until he built a mosque with chambers, as well as a house for Imam Ali (as). Then, the Holy Prophet (sawas) and Imam Ali (as) moved to their new houses.[1]

12. Significances of Imam Ali's Self-Sacrifice for the Holy Prophet

1. Imam Ali's self-sacrifice for the Holy Prophet (sawas) when he replaced him and spent that night in his bed in order to give pretend that the Holy Prophet (sawas) was still there, stands for an indication of the principle-based maturity of Imam Ali's personality. It also represents his eligible capacity to act for the Holy Prophet (sawas) who was willing to prepare him for undertaking the most difficult of missions and to invest in him with every demanding affair, astounding calamity, and crucial event.

2. On the night before the Holy Prophet's migration to Yathrib, Imam Ali (as) wore the Holy Prophet's garment and spent that night in the Holy Prophet's bed so as to give a false impression to the assassinators. This process of camouflage alludes to the unique principle-founded blood relationship between the two. It also confirms the belief that Imam Ali's self is the same as the Holy Prophet's, which manifested itself more obviously when the Holy Prophet (sawas) entrusted Imam Ali (as) with more missions, and the latter carried them out in the most perfect manner.

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1. Al-Kulayni, **al-Kafi** 8:339-40/hadith 536; Hassan ibn Sulayman al-Hilli, **Mukhtasar Basa'ir al-Darajat**, pp. 130; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 19:116/hadith 2.

3. Imam Ali's stay in Makkah for three days after the incident of self-sacrifice stands for another proof of his unmatched courage. During these three days, he declared bravely and confidently his principled attitude and unwavering steadfastness on the course of the Holy Prophet (sawas) and he was always ready for sacrificing everything for him. Also during these three days, Imam 'Ali (as) carried out all of the Holy Prophet's instructions, accomplished all his missions quietly and unerringly, and then moved toward Yathrib openly before the sights of the people of Quraysh.

4. The incident of Imam 'Ali's self-sacrifice, as well as the following events, revealed some aspects of his unique personality. Thus, Imam 'Ali's real courage, mental and physical strength, spiritual maturity, principled faithfulness, and dedication to carrying out the prophetic instructions and divine will-all these aspects of Imam 'Ali's personality- were shown evidently in the incident of self-sacrifice.

Third Stage: Imam 'Ali from Migration until the Holy Prophet's Death

Imam 'Ali; the Brother of the Holy Prophet

When the Holy Prophet (sawas) started establishing the nub of the Muslim community and planned to brace the mutual relationships between the individuals of this new society, he declared the brotherhood association between each pair of Muslims under an unprecedented circumstance. His intention was to help Muslims espouse one of the basic principles of Islam, i.e. Islamic brotherhood. In fact, this matter was urgently required as a fundamental principle within the Islamic mission, during both of its stages: the secret and the public. Soon after that, the Holy Prophet (sawas) migrated to Yathrib, where the second declaration of the Islamic brotherhood was held.

In contemplation on the process involved in the fraternity ties between the Muslims, it is revealed that the Holy Prophet (sawas) connected similar pairs to each other introducing each person with another who sharedsimilarities. If truth be told, fraternization is in reality a far-reaching strategic process, carrying many significances and dynamic indicatives in the progress of the Islamic mission. By means of this Islamic brotherhood, relationships between Muslims

were held together, ideas matured, and creativity achieved. These very goals were reached by way of the first fraternization that was held in Makkah before the migration to Yathrib.

Hence, in the new stage of Islam and just a few months after the migration to Yathrib (lately al-Madinah), the same process of fraternization was repeated for the same reasons. Describing this process some historians have written: "…The Messenger of Allah (sawas) has declared – the religious brotherhood pronouncing each pair within the Muslim community as brothers-in-faith; as such one member from the Muslims of Makkah who emigrated to Yathrib (i.e. *Muhajirun*) and another from Yathrib (i.e. *Ansar*), whose people supported and received the Holy Prophet (sawas) and the Muslims of Makkah, became brothers-in-faith. He fraternized between two men who had similar characteristics and then took 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib by the arm, declaring, 'This one is my brother!' Hudhayfah said, 'So, the Messenger of Allah is the chief of the Messengers, the leader of the pious ones, and the envoy of the Lord of the Worlds. No one amongst the human beings can be a match of or an equal to him. 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib is his brother.'"[1]

Imam 'Ali's Marriage to Lady Fatimah al-Zahra'

As soon as Muslims established themselves at Yathrib and the principles and teachings of Islam began to intensify in their hearts and their power to defend the message of Islam and the Holy Messenger manifested itself vigorously, the mutual relationships of Muslims advanced toward building a well-cultured and civilized community, founded on socially advanced footings, under the leadership of the divinely chosen Prophet Muhammad (sawas) whom Allah guarded against any error in understanding and reception of the divine revelation, as well as in propagation for the heavenly message, in education, and in carrying out the mission. At that time, the twenty

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1. Sheikh -Tusi, **al-Amali**, pp. 586-7/hadith 1214&1215; al-Tabarsi, **I'lam al-Wara bi-A'lam al-Huda** 1:363; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 38:333/hadith 5; Ibn Sa'd, **al-Tabaqat al-Kubra** 3:22-3; al-Hakim al-Nayshaburi, **al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn** 3:14; Ibn Hajar, **Fath al-Bari** 7:210-1.The incident of the fraternization of Muslims is so famous that it has been mentioned in all of reference books of history of Islam and biography of the Holy Prophet (sawas).

year old ‘Ali was still falling upon the enemies in the battlefields in defence of the Islamic faith and mission. He was with the Holy Prophet (sawas) at every step; therefore, he attained the highest rank in the view of the Holy Prophet (sawas), as he lived with him and was the closest of all other Muslims to him.

Two years after the blessed migration, the Holy Prophet’s daughter reached maturity and suitors began to knock at the Holy Prophet’s door, asking for the hand of his daughter; al-Zahra' (the luminous lady). Although the majority of these suitors were his companions who competed with each other in proposing to his daughter, the Holy Prophet (sawas) refused them all, but with pleasant words such as: "*I am waiting for an order from Allah in this regard*."[1]‘Ali, the (paternal) cousin of the Holy Prophet, was one of those who desired to marry Lady Fatimah, but he was too shy to discuss the matter with her father and too poor to manage marriage. However, after being encouraged by some people to go ahead, Imam ‘Ali (as) found the courage to ask for Lady Fatimah’s hand from her father. Bowing his head down because of extreme shyness, ‘Ali (as) visited the Holy Prophet (sawas), who immediately knew what ‘Ali had come for. He received him with his usual gaiety and happy expression. With leniency and gentleness, the Holy Prophet (sawas) then asked ‘Ali (as) to state the reason why he had come. With a faint voice, Imam ‘Ali (as) said: "*O Allah’s Messenger! Would you marry Fatimah to me?"*

Replying to him, the Holy Prophet (sawas) said: "*Welcome and hail! Yes, I do."*

He then hurried to his daughter’s room to inform her of ‘Ali’s desire for marrying her and thus said to her: *"I have besought my Lord to give you in marriage to the best and most darling of all of His creatures to Him. You have already had an idea about ‘Ali’s excellence and virtuous situations. Today, he came to me asking for your hand. What is your answer?"* Lady Fatimah (as) kept silent and said nothing. So, the Holy Prophet (sawas) left her, saying: "*Her silence is her approval and acceptance."*

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1. Al-Irbili, **Kashf al-Ghummah** 1:353.

Afterward, the Holy Prophet (sawas) gathered the Muslims and delivered a speech, in which he said: "*Verily, Allah has ordered me to give Fatimah in marriage to 'Ali...*" He then turned toward 'Ali (as) and said: *"My Lord has ordered me to give Fatimah in marriage to you... Are you pleased with this marriage, 'Ali?"* Replying: "*Yes, I am, O Allah's Messenger."* Immediately, 'Ali prostrated himself to express thanks to Allah. Commenting, the Holy Prophet (sawas) said: "*May Allah bless both of you and bring from you many good generations!"*

Bringing with him the dowry that he could collect after he had sold his armour, 'Ali (as) came to the Holy Prophet (sawas), delivering it to him. So, the Holy Prophet (sawas) ordered Abu-Bakr, Bilal, Ammar, a group of his companions, and Umm-Ayman to buy the trousseau and the requirements of marriage. When the requirements were bought and brought before the Holy Prophet (sawas), he turned them over with his hand and said: "*May Allah bless the people whose vessels are mostly made of pottery!*"[1]

So, the betrothal and marriage of Imam 'Ali and Lady Fatimah was accomplished very easily and simply, and with minimum costs. The trousseau of their marriage was so simple and thus, this blessed marriage was celebrated by the Holy Prophet (sawas) and his relatives, the Banu-Hashim.

It is reported that when the Holy Prophet (sawas) was blamed for giving his daughter in marriage to 'Ali, he answered: "*If Allah had not created 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib, there would have been no equal to Fatimah in this world.*"[2]

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1. Al-Irbili, **Kashf al-Ghummah** 1:363-9; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 43:124-30/hadith 32; al-Khawarizmi, **al-Manaqib**, pp. 342-9, Chapter 20/hadith 364. The narrations of Imam 'Ali's marriage to Lady Fatimah al-Zahra' are so famous that they can be found in books of the Prophet's traditions and biography, yet with different expressions and various ways of narrating.
2. Al-Fattal al-Nayshaburi, **Rawdat al-Wa'izin**, pp. 146; 'Ali ibn Yunus al-'Amili, **al-Sirat al-Mustaqim** 1:172; al-Hurr al-'Amili, **al-Jawahir al-Saniyyah**, pp. 252.

According to another narration, the Holy Prophet (sawas) is reported to have addressed ‘Ali, saying: "*If you had not existed, there would not have existed any equal to Fatimah on this globe.*"[1]

Imam ‘Ali with the Holy Prophet in His Battles

1. Imam ‘Ali in the Battle of Badr

As a result of his migration to Yathrib, the Holy Prophet (sawas) opened up a new era in the history of mankind in general and the history of the Islamic mission in particular. By this migration, the features of the Islamic state began to manifest more clearly and the elements of the Muslims’ power was obviously noticeable. On the other hand, the people of Quraysh and their allies; i.e. the polytheists and the Jews of Yathrib pretended to have accepted Islam but clandestinely continued plotting conspiracies against Islam, aiming to annihilate it. Having been acquainted with all these circumstances, and knowing the nature of these hypocrites, the Holy Prophet (sawas) dealt with everybody using ultimate wisdom and deliberation. It was natural for him not to show any weakness in the face of conspiracies and ceaseless assaults by the enemies of Islam and he sent brigades to threaten and chase these raiders and assaulters.

Because Yathrib had such an important and strategic impact on the ways of commerce and communications in the centre of the Arabian Peninsula, the growing Muslims formed an enormous pressure on all others. From the moment Imam ‘Ali arrived in Yathrib, he began working in every aspect and field of life. Imam ‘Ali (as) contributed to the establishment of the new life, being driven by divinely inspired vigour and determination, performing that which was required by the conditions of the Islamic mission. He followed the leadership and instructions of the Holy Prophet (sawas), with respect to the formation of the new state and the promulgation for Islam. He was the strongest fist with which the Holy Prophet (sawas) stroked his enemies. This is clearly seen in Imam ‘Ali’s role in every battle he entered and finished victoriously.

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1. Ibn Shahr'ashub, **Manaqib** 2:207; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 43:107/hadith 22.

Usually, victory in every battle depends upon the result of the first round; hence, the party that wins the first round will be the winner. This rule applied to the Battle of Badr,[1] which was the beginning of the decline of all military powers in the Arabian Peninsula, especially that of the Quraysh, and was the starting point of all of the victories and conquests achieved by the Muslims.

It is reported that 'Utbah ibn Rabiah, his brother Shaybah, and al-Walid ibn 'Utbah, eminent warriors of the army of Quraysh, advanced between the two armies, challenging the Muslim army. Three of the warriors; namely, Awf, his brother Muwidh ibn afra', and Abdullah ibn Ruwah, all of whom belonged to the Ansar, agreed to fight against them. As the warriors of Quraysh asked them to introduce themselves, they came to know that they were from the people of Yathrib; therefore, they said, "You are noblemen, but we do not want to duel you; rather, other warriors who belong to our folks and can be matches of us should come out and fight against us." The Holy Prophet (sawas) ordered his uncle Hamzah, his cousin 'Ubaydah ibn al-arith, and his cousin ‘Ali ibn Abi-Talib to ready themselves for fighting against them. As the six warriors approached each other, 'Ubaydah ibn al-arith duelled 'Utbah, Hamzah duelled Shaybah, and ‘Ali duelled al-Walid. As for Hamzah, he killed Shaybah right away. ‘Ali killed al-Walid, but 'Ubaydah and 'Utbah wounded each other and fell to the ground. Immediately, Hamzah and ‘Ali attacked 'Utbah and killed him.[2]

After these individual duels, a mass battle broke out. If the matter is taken from a military point of view, the two armies were not equal in number, because the Muslim soldiers were not more than three hundred and thirteen persons, while the enemies were about nine hundred and fifty.[3] Yet, the Muslim soldiers fought with full faith and in defence of their belief, while the polytheists fought for the sake of their ignorant-based zeal and tribalism.

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1. This battle, which took place on the seventeenth-or nineteenth-of Ramadan, AH 2, is also called the Great Battle of Badr.
2. Sheikh Al-Mufid, **Kitab al-Irshad** 1:68-9; Sayyid al-Murtada, **al-Rasa'il** 4:119-20; **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:148; Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi’l-Tarikh** 2:125; Ibn Kathir, **al-Bidayah wa’l-Nihayah** 3:332-3.
3. Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi’l-Tarikh** 2:118.

Thus, new elements and factors played a role in this battle, such as the prayers of the Holy Prophet (sawas), the bravery of Hamzah, and the physical strength of ‘Ali (as). ‘Ali and Hamzah, as well as the other Muslim heroes, dived into the troops of Quraysh without bearing in mind who they were and how many their enemies were. So, many heads of the polytheists left their bodies, as Allah the Almighty supplied the Muslims with power, strength of mind, and steadfastness. Those who survived the strikes of the Muslim heroes had no other way but to run away as fast as they could, while those who failed to run away fell as captives in the hands of the Muslims. The Muslims took seventy men as prisoners of war and killed seventy two.

Reports of the battle[1]confirm that Imam ‘Ali (as) killed the greatest amount, since he killed at least twenty-four soldiers and participated in killing twenty-eight. Those who were slain by Imam ‘Ali in this battle seemed to be the heroes and leading men of Quraysh.

Imam ‘Ali (as), in this vital battle, was the standard-bearer. He also played a distinctive role in the victory of the Muslim party.[2]

It is reported that Mu'awiyah ibn Abi-Sufyan asked a man from the Banu-Kinanah tribe who had visited him whether he had participated in the Battle of Badr or not.

"Yes, I did," answered the man.

"*So,"* Mu'awiyah asked: "*Tell me of what you saw and witnessed*."

The man said, *"It is true that we witnessed that battle, but it was as if we were not there. Victory was achieved in that battle even swifter than what we expected."*

Mu'awiyah further asked: "*Describe to me what you saw during that battle."*

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1. See Sheikh al-Mufid, **Kitab al-Irshad** 1:69; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 19:365; and Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 14:212.
2. Al-Hilli, **al-‘Udad al-Qawiyyah**, pp. 247/hadith 40; Ibn al-Dimashqi, **Jawahir al-Matalib fi Manaqib al-Imam 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib** 1:234; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, **al-Isti'ab** 3:1096, No. 1855; al-Safadi, **al-Wafi bi’l-Wafiyyat** 21:178; al-Mazi, **Tahdhib al-Kamal** 20:483, No. 4089.

The man said: "*I saw 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib such a lion-like, young at heart, and unequalled man who fought marvellously. He killed every warrior who stood in his face and annihilated everyone who received one of his blows. I have never seen anyone like him in raiding on his enemies; he attacked and suddenly turned his face backward like a sharp fox, as if he had other eyes in the back of his head. His jumping was like the jumping of a ferocious beast.*"[1]

2. Imam 'Ali in the Battle of Uhud

The people of Quraysh who survived the Battle of Badr could not forget their crushing defeat and the death of their heroes, horsemen, and warriors; they therefore decided to avenge themselves upon the Muslims so as to rehabilitate the prestigious name and honour which they had lost because of the battle. In less than a year, the polytheists readied themselves for a new battle against the Muslims. Their allies, namely other pagan polytheists and the Jews, joined them in this battle and so did everyone who hated and harboured malice against Islam. Thus, the word of atheism joined all these parties who united against the truth. With more than three thousand soldiers, the army of atheism headed for al-Madinah (Yathrib) on the first days of the month of Shawwal, the third year after the Holy Prophet's migration.

The Holy Prophet (sawas), no sooner had been informed of this news, held a meeting with the Muslims and sought their opinion as to the best decision they would make under these conditions. The Holy Prophet (sawas) then delivered a speech in which he urged them to fight patiently and steadfastly. He also promised that they would be the victorious and would gain a great reward. Along with his followers who were about one thousand men, the Holy Prophet (sawas) prepared himself for fighting, gave the main standard to 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib, and distributed the other flags among the *muhajirun* and the *ansar*. On their way to battle, about three hundred hypocrites, headed by Abdullah ibn Ubayy, left the Muslim army and returned to al-Madinah. Nevertheless, the Holy Prophet (sawas) and his faithful followers continued marching until they reached Mount Uhud. There, they resided and the Holy Prophet (sawas) prepared his soldiers for battle by designing a very precise strategy to guarantee

1. Abu-Na'im, **ilyat al-Awliya'** 9:145, No. 451.

victory for them. He ordered fifty archers to stay to the side of the mountain behind the Muslim troops. He emphasized that these archers remain at their positions, even if all of the Muslim soldiers were killed.[1]

The polytheists of Quraysh reached the area around Mount Uhud and started preparing themselves for fighting. They made a war strategy and decided everyone's role as they liked. It was agreed that the main standard should be held by the members of the Banu-abd al-Dar tribe. The first to carry that standard was Talhah ibn Abi-Talhah. Once the Holy Prophet (sawas) came to know about this, he took the standard from Imam 'Ali (as) and gave it to Musaab ibn 'Umayr who belonged to the Banu-abd al-Dar tribe. So, the main standard of the Muslim army was kept in the hand of Musaab until he was martyred. Only then, the Holy Prophet (sawas) gave the standard back to Imam 'Ali (as).[2]

The moment the two armies accomplished their preparations for fighting, the battle broke out. So, Talhah ibn Abi-Talhah - the arch horseman of the polytheists' army, the bearer of the standard, and one of the most courageous warriors of Quraysh, advanced, raising his voice with words of challenge and belittlement of the Muslim army, saying: "*O group of Muhammad's followers! You claim that Allah will lead us to Hellfire quickly through your swords and will lead you to Paradise quickly through our swords. So, is there now any one of you whom will be led to Paradise quickly through my sword or who will lead me quickly to Hellfire through his sword?*"

Accepting the challenge, Imam 'Ali (as) pressed forward. So, the two men showed themselves in the field between the two armies, while the Holy Prophet (sawas) was sitting under a canopy that had been set

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1. See Ibn Hisham, **al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah** 3:581-6; **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:187-92; Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 2:150-2; Ibn Kathir, **al-Bidayah wa'l-Nihayah** 4:11-7. The paragraph is quoted from these reference books with brevity. About Imam 'Ali's bearing the major standard of the Muslim army, it has been reported from Ibn Habban's **al-Thuqat** 1:224-5, who mentioned in details the whole story beginning with the Holy Prophet's having been informed of the raid of the polytheists of Quraysh and his departure from al-Madinah.
2. **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:199.

up for him for watching the battle and its progress. Imam 'Ali (as) immediately struck Talhah with his sword so intensely that he cut off his leg. Talhah fell to the ground and the standard slipped away from his hand. As Imam 'Ali (as) advanced to finish him off, Talhah took off his clothes and showed hisprivate part, adjuring Imam 'Ali (as) in the name of God and kinship not to kill him; so, Imam 'Ali (as) spared his life and went back. Upon seeing this situation, the Holy Prophet (sawas) raised his voice with the '*allahu-akbar*' statement and so did the Muslims as an expression of their joy at the result of this round.[1]'Uthman, Talhah's brother, moved ahead, picked up the standard, and raised it, butHamzah ibn abd al-Muttalib attacked him and put him to death. Their brother, Abu-Sa'id, then took the standard before Imam 'Ali (as) attacked him and kill him. Likewise, as soon as Arta'ah ibn Shurahbil picked up the standard, Imam 'Ali (as) attacked and kill him. So, Imam 'Ali (as) andHamzah ibn abd al-Muttalib killed nine persons from the Banu-abd al-Dar tribe who alternated on raising the standard of the Quraysh army. Finally, a slave of the Banu-abd al-Dar tribe, whose name was Sawab, advanced to raise the standard, but Imam 'Ali (as) attacked and killed him. After this, no one in the polytheists' army dared to raise the standard, which was left on the ground of the battlefield. Thus, horror crept into the polytheists' hearts, causing their spirituality to collapse. The polytheists absconded precipitately and the Muslims chased them until they surrounded their women. At the moment the battle seemed to have been won by the Muslims, an astounding catastrophe befell them as the archers left their positions in the mountain and came down to collect the spoils of the war with the other Muslim fighters. None remained on the mountain except ten persons. Khalid ibn al-Walid, the polytheist who was the commander-in-chief of the cavalry in Quraysh army, seized this opportunity. As he noticed that the archers had left their positions and none remained there except ten persons, who would not be able to confront an attack, he ordered his soldiers to assail the remaining archers. Followed by 'Ikrimah, Khalid attacked and killed all these ten archers.[2]

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1. **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:194; Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 2:152.
2. **Tafsir al-Qummi** 1:112-3; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 20:50-2/hadith 3; **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:194-7; Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 24:152-4.

Suddenly, the whole situation changed and the polytheists won control over the battle, penetrating the Muslim camp and cutting open their lines. The Muslims encountered an unprecedented tragedy that confused them and caused them to lose their minds. As their victory turned into defeat and their triumph into debacle, the Muslim warriors left the Holy Prophet (sawas) alone and gave him up to his enemies, especially after the martyrdom ofHamzah ibn abd al-Muttalib and Musaab ibn 'Umayr. So, none was there for the Holy Prophet (sawas) except Imam ‘Ali and a few persons from the *muhajirun* and *ansar*.

At these very critical and decisive moments, history recorded for Imam ‘Ali (as) a magnificent incident demonstrating loyalty, steadfastness and self-sacrifice when he stood valiantly to defend the Holy Prophet (sawas) fearlessly and heroically, caring for nothing and bearing nothing in his mind except how to make the Holy Prophet (sawas) and his divine mission survive the attacks of the enemies. On one hand, Imam ‘Ali (as) raised the standard of the Muslim army, while his other hand carried the sword in order to force out the attacking battalions and drive the enemies away from the Holy Prophet (sawas). So, Imam ‘Ali (as) represented a whole army with full arms and numbers. In the midst of that horrifying situation, whenever the Holy Prophet (sawas) saw a group attacking him, he would shout, "‘Ali, attack this group!" Without hesitation, Imam ‘Ali (as) would attack and drive them back. Imam ‘Ali (as) kept on fighting so bravely until wounds were heavily seen on his face, head, chest, belly, and hands.

Expressing his admiration of Imam ‘Ali’s act, the Archangel Gabriel came to the Holy Prophet (sawas) and said: *"Indeed, this is the true altruism!"*

Answering him, the Holy Prophet (sawas) said: *"‘Ali is part of me and I am part of him."*

The archangel said: *"And I am part of you both."*

Immediately, a sound was heard in the sky shouting: *"There is no sword except Dhu’l-Faqar,* [1] *and there is no champion except ‘Ali."*[1]

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1. It is well known that Imam ‘Ali (‘a) had a special sword called Dhu’l-Faqar, either because his sword had segments (faqrah) similar to the

Thus Imam 'Ali (as) managed to protect the Holy Prophet (sawas) from being killed, reaching the battle whereas a state of balance and equality between the two parties ensured, so that neither side was considered decisively victorious.

3. Imam 'Ali after the Battle of Uhud

When Abu-Sufyan and his remaining forces left the battlefield, the Holy Prophet (sawas) asked Imam 'Ali (as) to track them, giving him these instructions: *"Follow these people and watch them. If you see them ride off their horses and ride on camels, this means that they will head for Makkah; otherwise, they will attack al-Madinah."*

As he carried out the Holy Prophet's order, Imam 'Ali (as) noticed that the people rode off their horses and mounted camels. So, he understood that they planned to return home.

When the Holy Prophet (sawas) returned home, he handed his sword over to his daughter Fatimah (as), saying: "*O daughter, remove the blood from this sword."*

As Imam 'Ali (as), her husband, handed his sword over to her, she noticed that his hand was covered with blood up to his shoulder. So, the Holy Prophet (sawas) said to his daughter: *"Take his sword, Fatimah! Your husband has indeed carried his mission completely. By his sword, Allah has caused death to the heroes of Quraysh."*[2]

The Battle of Uhud was so severe in its consequences, so heavy in its pressure, and so costly in its inconveniences. In the midst of its bitterness, we still can see in this battle some brilliant gleams with regard to Imam 'Ali's outstanding situations. Second to none, Imam 'Ali's (as) actions were distinguished by a number of features in this battle. These features can be summed up in the following points:

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vertebras, or because his sword was so deadly (faqar: death) that it would never spare the life of anyone who was struck by it.

1. Al-Kulayni, **al-Kafi** 8:1110/hadith 90; Sheikh al-Saduq, **'Ilal al-Shara'i'** 1:7/hadith 3; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 20:70-71/hadith 7; Tarikh al-Tabari 2:197; Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 2:154; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 14:250-1.

2. Sheikh al-Mufid, **Kitab al-Irshad** 1:89-90; al-Irbali, **Kashf al-Ghummah** 1:195; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 20:88.

1) Imam ‘Ali (as) raised high the standard of the Holy Prophet (sawas). Although the majority of Muslim warriors ran away from the battlefield, the standard never fell from Imam ‘Ali’s hand.

2) Imam ‘Ali (as) killed the bearers of the enemies’ standard who alternated on raising it. By this act, Imam ‘Ali (as) showed his military experience and exceptional courage, creating a deep divide between the lines of the enemies, which was the major reason for their defeat in the first part of the battle.

3) Imam ‘Ali (as) remained firm up until the end of the battle and he defended the Holy Prophet (sawas) boldly. Although all others left the Holy Prophet (sawas) and made him face the enemy alone, Imam ‘Ali (as) stood by him and never ran off. This is a clear-cut indicative of his absolute faith in the Holy Prophet, his divine mission, and the principles for which he fought that battle. Moreover, this is the best indication of Imam ‘Ali’s (as) profound faith and the scope of its deep-rootedness in his mentality.

4) Imam ‘Ali (as) was the one and only defender of the Holy Prophet (sawas). He protected him against the attacks of the enemy battalions. Whenever an enemy tried to kill the Holy Prophet (sawas), he found Imam Ali (as) acting as the protective armour that guarded the Holy Prophet (sawas) against all misfortunes. Of course, this is a clear indication of Imam Ali’s love, self-sacrifice, and care for the Holy Prophet (sawas) and his safety.

5) Imam Ali (as) killed the majority of the human casualties of the Battle of Uhud from the polytheists’ army.[1] This is an indication of his incomparable combatant capabilities, power, and courage.

6) The high moral standards and values that Imam Ali (as) showed during the Battle of Uhud became proverbial, especially when he disdained from finishing off Talhah ibn Abi-Talhah when the latter took off his clothes and showed his *back* so as to survive the Imam’s strike. So, Imam Ali (as) ignored him out of nobility and modesty.

7) In the Battle of Uhud, Imam Ali (as) was the closest to the Holy Prophet (sawas) in position. He stayed constantly with him and never left his side, as the Holy Prophet (sawas) directed him to drive back

1. Sheikh al-Mufid, **Kitab al-Irshad**, pp. 82.

the attackers. When the Holy Prophet (sawas) fell in one of the holes that had been dug by Abu-'Amir the monk in the battlefield in order for the Muslims to fall therein, it was Imam Ali (as) who took him from by arm out of the hole.[1] Similarly, it was Imam Ali (as) who filled his leather shield with water and brought it to the Holy Prophet (sawas) so that he would wash his face and head and remove blood and dust that covered them.

8) In spite of the wounds suffered by Imam Ali (as) and the astonishing efforts he exerted in that battle, the Holy Prophet (sawas), immediately after battle, sent him to detect the intentions of the polytheists and see what they were willing to do. This indicates that the Holy Prophet (sawas) trusted Imam Ali's superior ability, accuracy, and skill in treating all incurable problems.[2]

4. Imam Ali in the Battle of the Ditch

Although the polytheists of Quraysh knew for sure that they failed to eradicate the Muslims, they prepared themselves once more for delivering a deathblow to them through making an alliance with the other tribes and seeking the help of the Jews. Under the commandership of Abu-Sufyan, the army of the polytheists amounted to ten thousand warriors.[3]

The anger and malice of the polytheists augmented when they set eyes on the ditch, which represented a new defence strategy adopted by the Holy Prophet (sawas) after he had taken counsel with his companions. Salman the Persian suggested to him that they should dig a ditch around the city of al-Madinah. However, enthusiasm, fervour, and feeling proud with their artillery and great numbers had a powerful impact on the mentalities of the polytheists and their allies who had united to fight against Muslims to annihilate Islam forever.

A few horsemen of the Quraysh army were able to cross the ditch from a somewhat narrow place and come face-to-face with the

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1. Ibn Hisham, **al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah** 3:598; Ibn Sayyid al-Nas, **'Uyun al-Athar** 1:418; Ibn Kathir, **al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah** 3:46.
2. Imam 'Ali's distinctive features in the Battle of Uhud have been mentioned by Sayyid Muhsin al-Amin in his book A'yan al-Shi'ah 1:390.
3. **Tafsir al-Qummi** 2:176; Ibn Sa'd, **al-Tabaqat al-Kubra** 2:66; **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:236.

Muslim army. As the panic of the Muslims increased, Imam Ali (as) led a few other warriors to the gap from which the polytheist horsemen could pass across with their horses. So, they went to tackle those who managed to infiltrate through the gap and closed the crossing point.

'Amr ibn 'abd-Wudd was one of the horsemen who crossed the ditch. He stood facing the Muslim army and challenged them. Having seen this, the Muslims sank in deep silence and fear crept into their hearts, as each one of them wondered what he should do in facing the knight whose force alone was considered to be equal to the force of one thousand knights.

Upon this occurrence, the Holy Prophet (sawas) shouted at his companions: *"Will any one of you fight with this man?"*

As there was no answer, Imam Ali (as) stood up and said*: "O Allah's Messenger! I will fight this man."*

Yet, the Holy Prophet (sawas) ordered Ali (as) to sit down and repeated his request. Once again, none of the Muslims opened their mouths with a single word except Imam 'Ali (as) who kept on insisting that the Holy Prophet (sawas) permit him to face the man.[1] Although the Holy Prophet (sawas) ordered Ali (as) to sit down each time, he finally permitted Ali (as) to confront 'Amr. Preparing Ali (as) for the fight, the Holy Prophet (sawas) dressed him with his own turban, gave him his sword, and put his armour on him. He then raised his hands towards the sky and prayed to Almighty Allah earnestly, saying, "O Allah, You have taken from me 'Ubaydah on the day of the Battle of Badr and Hamzah on the day of the Battle of Uhud. So please, on this day, save 'Ali my brother and cousin. So, O Lord, leave me not alone; and You are the best of inheritors."[2]

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1. Sheikh al-Mufid, **Kitab al-Irshad** 1:100; al-Tabarsi, **Tafsir Majma' al-Bayan** 8:131-2; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 41:89; al-Khawarizmi, **Manaqib**, pp. 169/hadith 202; Ibn Kathir, **al-Bidayah wa'l-Nihayah** 4:121; al-Halabi, **al-Sirah al-Halabiyyah** 2:641.
2. Al-Halabi, **al-Sirah al-Halabiyyah** 2:641-2.

Before Ali (as) advanced to the battlefield, the Holy Prophet (sawas) expressed, "Entire belief has come out to face entire disbelief."[1]

While his heart was full of confidence in Allah's victory, Imam Ali (as) advanced to face 'Amr who was so surprised by this step of Ali (as); that he hesitated to fight him. Yet, having noticed this hesitation, Imam Ali (as) said: *"O 'Amr! You have taken upon yourself in the presence of your people that whenever a man from Quraysh invites you to respond to one of three things, you will at least accept one of them."*

'Amr answered: "*This is true. This is my pledge."*

"So," Imam Ali (as) said*: "I invite you to bear witness that there is no god save Allah and that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah, and to submit to the Lord of the Worlds."*

'Amr said: *"Forget this option."*

Imam Ali (as) said: *"Alas! If you had accepted that option, it would most certainly have been better for you than anything else!"*

Giving 'Amr another suggestion, Imam 'Ali ('a) said: "*The other thing is that you should go back home."*

'Amr said: *"The women of Quraysh will never open such a subject!"*

Giving him the third option, Imam 'Ali (as) said: *"So, I challenge you in combat."*

Anger covered 'Amr, as he was flabbergasted by the boldness of this young man. He therefore rode off his horse, hamstrung it, and advanced towards 'Ali (as). As they started fighting, 'Amr struck 'Ali (as) with his sword, but 'Ali (as) repelled it with his head shield. So, the sword was fixed in the shield and hit 'Ali's head. Then, 'Ali (as) hit 'Amr on the shoulder so heavily that 'Amr fell to the

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1. Sayyid Ibn Tawus, **al-Tara'if**, pp. 35/hadith 22 & pp. 60/hadith 57; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 20:215/hadith 2; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 13:261 & 285 & 19:61. Al-Milani, in **Qadatuna**, reported the hadith from al-Damiri in his famous book Hayat al-Hayawan 1:248. Al-Fadl ibn Ruzbahan is reported to have said, "This Prophetic saying is too authentic to be denied by anyone except an ill-opinioned and a weak-faithed indiviual. However, it does not indicate the Imamate (of Imam 'Ali)."

ground stained with his blood. Thereupon, Imam ‘Ali (as) raised his voice with the ‘*allahu-akbar*’ statement, and the Muslims imitated him. So, the scene ended with the slaying of ‘Amr by the sword of Imam ‘Ali (as). Upon seeing this horrible view, ‘Amr’s companions ran off, with Imam ‘Ali (as) chasing them. One of them; namely, Nawfal ibn abdullah, fell in the ditch and Imam ‘Ali (as) went down there and killed him.[1]

The Allies received this fatal blow with astonishment and shock, because they never expected to see anyone dare to fight against and kill ‘Amr ibn abd-Wudd. Fear crept into their minds for this reason and none of them dared to make a repeat of ‘Amr’s attempt. They did however, continue besieging the city of al-Madinah until Allah the Almighty permitted that they should be defeated and the Holy Prophet (sawas) applied another strategy in fighting them.

Among all those Muslims who were present in the Battle of the Ditch (*khandaq*), Imam ‘Ali (as) was characterized by various distinctive features, which will be cited in the following points:

1) Imam ‘Ali (as) took the initiative in sealing the gap through which ‘Amr and his companions crossed the ditch. This is a sign of his firmness and intrepidity in dealing with emergencies, in case it suddenly happened on the battlefield.

2) It was Imam ‘Ali (as) who accepted the challenge of ‘Amr and killed him, while all other Muslims hesitated and cowered at the thought of fighting against ‘Amr; therefore, none of them had the courage to face him. Praising Imam ‘Ali’s courage, the Holy Prophet (sawas) said, "The fight of ‘Ali ibn Abi-Talib against ‘Amr ibn Abd-Wudd on the day of the Battle of the Ditch is better than all the deeds of my community up to Resurrection Day."[2]

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1. Al-Nu'mani, **Sharh al-Akhbar** 1:323-4; Ibn Shahr'ashub, **Manaqib** 3:162; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 39:6; al-Hakim al-Nayshaburi, **al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn** 3:32-3; Ibn ‘Asakir, **Tarikh Madinat Dimashq** 42:78; Ibn al-Sabbagh, **al-Fusul al-Muhimmah**, pp. 58.
2. Ibn Shahr'ashub, **Manaqib** 3:163; Sayyid Ibn Tawus, **Iqbal al-A'mal** 2:267; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 39:2; al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, **Tarikh Baghdad** 13:19; al-Khawarizmi, **Manaqib**, pp. 107/hadith 112; **Tafsir al-Razi** 32:31.

3) Imam 'Ali's splendid courage and power that he showed throughout the battle revealed itself clearly when he ran after the absconders who fled the battlefield immediately after the slaying of 'Amr, while riding their horses.

4) In the most critical moments of the battle, Imam 'Ali (as) did not give up his high moral standards. In fact, he demonstrated the greatness of the mission of Islam and the great Messenger (sawas) when he refrained from robbing 'Amr's armour,[1] which was one of the best of armours owned by the Arabs.

5) As Imam 'Ali (as) killed 'Amr and Nawfal and chased the absconders, he restored confidence to the Muslims who lost it after they had seen the great numbers of the army of Quraysh and the allies. Meanwhile, Imam 'Ali's heroic acts were the main reason for the defeat of the polytheists, along with the stormy cold and windy weather they had to endure. Thus, they never contemplated re-invading the Muslims ever again.

6) Imam 'Ali (as) gained the highest honour when the Holy Prophet (sawas) testified to him, saying, "The entire belief has come out to face the entire disbelief."[2]

5. Imam Ali in the Al-Hudaibiyah Truce

After the laborious events and the bloody battles in which the Holy Prophet (sawas) and the Muslims engaged ended, the Islamic mission was able to make wide-ranging steps through which the Muslims regained a high goal, established an independent existence and considerable power, and sublime dignity that they forced everyone to respect and think twice before thinking of attacking them.

The Muslims yearned incredibly to visit the Holy Ka'bah in Makkah, as they always remembered it whenever they performed prayers, turning their faces towards it. At this stage of the Islamic mission, the Holy Prophet (sawas) was determined to carry out one of the religious

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1. The Arabs used to rob their slaughtered victims in the battlefield. But Imam Ali (as) refrained from doing so (Translator's remark).
2. Sayyid Ibn Tawus, **al-Tara'if** 35:22&60/hadith 57; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 2:215/hadith 2; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 3:261, 285 & 19:61.

duties as ordained by Allah the Almighty. He therefore decided to undertake the ritual Hajj (pilgrimage to Holy Ka'bah).[1] Before that, he took all required procedures and arrangements, one of which was that he very frequently declared that he would not wage war against the people of Quraysh or any other people.

However, when the people of Quraysh knew about the matter, they all agreed with one another in preventing the Holy Prophet (sawas) and the Muslims from entering the city of Makkah to visit the Holy Ka'bah, no matter how great the efforts they exerted and precious things they would lose for this cause. First of all, they sent a group of horsemen under the commandership of Khalid ibn al-Walid in order to prevent the Muslims from entering Makkah.

When the Holy Prophet (sawas) and the Muslims resided in a region called al-Juhafah, their water ran out and they could not find any more in the region; therefore, the Holy Prophet (sawas) sent some people to search for water, but they didn't, hesitating because of theirfear of the people of Quraysh. The Holy Prophet (sawas) then ordered Imam Ali (as) to lead some people to find water. The Muslims had no doubt that Imam Ali (as) would fail to bring water, just like those who preceded him. However, Imam Ali (as) pressed forward, arrived in an oasis called *al-Hirar*, and filled the skins with water. He then came towards the Holy Prophet (sawas) while these skins were making sounds like rings. Once the Holy Prophet's eyes fell on Ali, he raised his voice with *allahu-akbar* statement and prayed for him earnestly.[2]

Finally, the horsemen of Quraysh forced the Holy Prophet (sawas) and the accompanying Muslims to take an alternative route, as opposed to the one leading to Makkah. So, a man from the Aslam tribe led the Holy Prophet (sawas) towards a rough road that took them away from their destination until they resided in a place called al-Hudaybiyah. More than once, the forces of Quraysh, under the commandership of Khalid ibn al-Walid, provoked the Muslims and

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1. The Holy Prophet (s) prepared for undertaking the ritual 'Umrah (minor Hajj) on the first days of Dhu'l-Qa'dah, AH 6.
2. Sheikh al-Mufid, **Kitab al-Irshad** 1:121; al-'Amili, **al-Durr al-Nazim**, pp. 172-3; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 20:360; Ibn Hajar, **al-Isabah** 5:269.

attacked them, but Imam 'Ali (as), as well as a group of sturdy Muslims, repelled all of these raids and did not give the polytheists any opportunity to make inroads upon the Muslims.[1]

Having noticed the Muslims' determination and grit to enter Makkah, the people of Quraysh eventually had to negotiate with the Holy Prophet (sawas), sending deputies to confer with him. The last of these deputies was Suhayl ibn amr andHuwaytib from the Banu-abd al-'Uzza tribe. It seemed that the negotiations were not restricted to the topic of the Muslims' entrance to Makkah that year;[2] rather, they dealt with further subjects for the interest of the two parties.

In this regard, Imam 'Ali (as) is reported to have said:

"On that day in al-Hudaybiyah, a group of the polytheists came to us and said to the Holy Prophet (sawas), 'Muhammad, some of our sons, brothers, and slaves left us and joined you because they had no knowledge of the religion. They only wanted to get rid of guarding our properties and estates. So, you should now send them back to us.'

Answering this, the Holy Prophet (sawas) said, 'If they have no knowledge of the religion as you claim, we will teach them! O people of Quraysh, if you do not stop such acts, Allah will most certainly send upon you one who will strike your necks with his sword after Allah has proven his heart for true faith.'

Abu-Bakr, 'Umar, and the polytheists asked: *'Who is that man?'*

The Holy Prophet (sawas) answered: *'He is the one amending my slippers."*

At that time, the Holy Prophet (sawas) had just given his slippers to Imam Ali (as) to amend them.[3]

A peace treaty with certain articles was signed between the Holy Prophet (sawas) and the polytheists of Quraysh at al-Hudaibiyah.

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1. Hashim Ma'ruf al-Hasani, **Sirat al-A'immah al-Ithnay'ashar** 1:217.
2. Sheikh al-Mufid, **Kitab al-Irshad** 1:119 and **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:276-7.
3. Al-Irbali, **Kashf al-Ghummah** 1:343; al-Tabari, **Dhakha'ir al-'Uqba**, pp. 76; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 20:344-5; **Sunan al-Tirmidhi** 5:397-8; Ibn al-Athir, **Usd al-Ghabah**, pp. 26; Ibn al-Bitriq, **al-'Umdah**, pp. 224-8/hadith 353-7.

When the two parties agreed to the pact, the Holy Prophet (sawas) said to Imam Ali (as): "*Write down: bismillahirrahmanirrahim (In the Name of Allah; the All-beneficent, the All-merciful)."*

Interrupting him, Suhayl ibn amr objected and said: *"As you say: 'al-rahman,' I do not know what he is! Rather, you should write down: 'bismikallahumma (In Your Name, O Allah)'."*

Infuriated, the Muslims said: *"No, by God! We will not write down any other form than bismillahirrahmanirrahim!"*

Yet, the Holy Prophet (sawas) said to Ali (as): *"You may write down: 'bismikallahumma.' Then, you may write down: 'Hereinafter is what has been agreed upon by Muhammad the Messenger of Allah…'"*

Once again, Suhayl interfered and said: "*If we knew that you are the messenger of God indeed, we would not prevent you from visiting the House of God nor would we fight you! Instead, you should write down: 'Muhammad the son of abdullah…'"*

The Holy Prophet (sawas) commented: *"I am surely the messenger of Allah, even if you belie me."*

Addressing Imam 'Ali (as), he said*: "You may erase the phrase: the Messenger of Allah."*

Imam Ali (as) said, "O Allah's Messenger! In fact, my hand cannot move to erase your name as the messenger of Allah."

So, the Holy Prophet (sawas) himself erased the phrase and said to 'Ali (as): *"Behold! You shall have the like of this in the future; and you shall do it against your will."*[1]

6. Imam 'Ali in the Campaign of Khaybar

As the al-Hudaibiyah Truce was concluded, the Holy Prophet (sawas) felt reassured that neither the polytheists of Quraysh nor the other tribes of the Arabian Peninsula, would make threats against the mission of Islam, since the articles of the al-Hudaibiyah Pact were gradually oriented towards the good of the Muslims. In addition, after

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1. Sheikh al-Mufid, **Kitab al-Irshad** 1:119-20; al-Tabarsi, **I'lam al-Wara bi-A'lam al-Huda** 1:371-2; **Tarikh al-Tabari**, pp. 281-2; Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 2:204.

the conclusion of this pact, the Muslims' power started augmenting mentally and physically, since great numbers of people embraced Islam. Thus, the Arabs realized that the Quraysh tribe, in spite of its arrogance, tyranny, and influence, failed to face the Holy Prophet (sawas) and the Muslims and failed to keep its status, as all of their schemes to eradicate Islam fell short. In view of this, the conclusion of the al-Hudaibiyah Truce by the Quraysh tribe was seen as a sign of surrender and submission to the new Islamic State.

Nevertheless, another antagonistic power was still there to provoke riot against and to waylay Islam. This unfaithful power were the Jews who lived outside the city of al-Madinah. Having had full acquaintance with the Jews and their faithlessness, the Holy Prophet (sawas) always kept an eye on them, lest they would plot conspiracies against Islam as soon as they receive any external support. In fact, the treacheries and breaches of pledges in the last five years were incessantly repeated by the Jews; therefore, the Holy Prophet (sawas) decided to make a foray against Khaybar,[1] which had lately become the stronghold and fortress of the Jews.

The Holy Prophet (sawas) ordered his companions and followers to ready themselves for marching into Khaybar as soon as possible. The instant they did, he left al-Madinah and gave the standard of the army to Ali (as). Moving rapidly towards Khaybar, he reached there at night, unbeknown to the inhabitants of Khaybar. In the morning, when they started their day as usual, they were surprised to see the Muslim army besieging their city; therefore, they came back inside their fortresses. Many fierce battles took place close to these fortresses, between the two parties, after the Holy Prophet (sawas) had laid siege to them so intensely. Although the Holy Prophet (sawas) could conquer some of their fortresses, both the siege and the fighting continued for more than twenty days, during which some well-fortified fortresses could not be conquered. Upon this situation, the Holy Prophet (sawas) gave his standard to Abu-Bakr as the commander of a campaign against the Jews, but the man failed to make any achievements. The next day, the Holy Prophet (sawas) did

1. Khaybar is a big city with many fortresses, ranches, and date-palm farms, lying about 90 miles to the north of al-Madinah city. The Campaign of Khaybar took place in the beginning of (the month of) Muharram, AH 7.

the same thing with 'Umar ibn al-Khattab who, just like his friend, returned defeated, "*accusing his soldiers of cowardice and they accused him of the same*."[1]

It was really difficult for the Holy Prophet (sawas) to see someone whom he had given his standard come back with disappointment or one whom he had chosen for a mission, return to him beaten. For this reason, the Holy Prophet (sawas) declared an immortal word with profound meanings. Within earshot of the majority of Muslims, he raised his voice with the following golden word:

"Tomorrow, I shall give the Standard to a person who loves Allah and His Prophet and who is loved by Allah and His Prophet; a person who always falls upon the enemy and never absconds. Allah shall grant his victory and conquest. Gabriel shall be to his right side and Michael to his left!"[2]

Having heard this Prophetic statement, the matter became on everyone's tongue. There was an element of expectancy in the atmosphere. Everyone wished that he would be the lucky person tomorrow to be given the standard in his hand. 'Umar ibn al-Khattab is reported to have said in response to this situation, "I had not had any desire for leadership except on that day when I wished I would be given the standard."[3]

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1. Al-Haythami, **Majma' al-Zawa'id** 9:124; Ibn Abi-Shaybah, **al-Musannaf** 8:521; al-Muttaqi al-Hindi, **Kanz al-'Ummal** 10:463; Ibn 'Asakir, **Tarikh Madinat Dimashq** 42:97.
2. With slight difference in the order of the statements, all of the transmitters of the Prophetic traditions from the various Islamic sects have reported this tradition both lengthily and briefly. Some of these reference books are as follows: Sheikh al-Saduq, al-Amali, pp. 604/hadith 839; Sheikh al-Mufid, **Kitab al-Irshad** 1:126; Qutb al-Din al-Rawandi, **al-Khara'ij wa'l-Jara'ih** 1:159/hadith 249; Ibn Tawus, al-Tara'if, pp. 58/hadith 53; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 39:9-10; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, **al-Musnad** 1:99, 185 & 4:52; **Sahih Muslim** 5:195 & 7:120; **Sunan Ibn Majah** 1:43/hadith 117; **Sunan al-Tirmidhi** 5:302/hadith 3807; al-Hakim al-Nayshaburi, **al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn** 4:109; Ibn ajar, **al-Isabah** 4:468. etc.
3. **Sahih Muslim** 7:121; Ibn 'Asakir, **Tarikh Madinat Dimashq** 42:83-4.

With the first sparks of morning, the Holy Prophet (sawas) ordered that the standard should be given to him. While everyone was standing in a row, the Holy Prophet (sawas) asked about 'Ali (as).

'Ali has an eye inflammation," the Holy Prophet (as) was told.

Nevertheless, the Holy Prophet (sawas) said, "Bring him before me."

Obeying the Holy Prophet's order, Salamah ibn al-Akwa' went to bring 'Ali. Leading 'Ali by the arm, Salamah brought him before the Holy Prophet (sawas) while his eyes were tired.

The Holy Prophet (sawas) put 'Ali's head in his lap, wet his hand from his saliva, and rubbed it over 'Ali's eyes. Immediately, his eyes were healed so swiftly as if they had never been sore. Then, the Holy Prophet (sawas) prayed to Allah the Almighty for 'Ali (as), saying: *"O Allah, please save him from cold and heat."*[1]

He then dressed 'Ali (as) with his iron armour, tied his sword Dhu'l-Faqar to his waist, gave him the standard, and asked him to head for the fortress of Khaybar. Instructing him, the Holy Prophet (sawas) said, "Advance in this way until you descend into the open space before them. Then, you should invite them to embrace Islam and tell them about their duties towards Allah if they accept. By Him Who grasps my soul (i.e. Allah the Almighty) I swear this: if Allah guides even only one person to Islam, this will be better for you than having the best kinds of camels."[2]

Salamah reported, saying: Rapidly and proudly, 'Ali (as) mended his paces towards the fortress of Khaybar and we ran after him, following his traces, until he fixed his standard in a heap of stones under the fortress. A Jew extended his neck from the top of the fortress and asked: *"Who are you?"*

"I am 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib," answered Imam 'Ali (as).

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1. Sulayman al-Kufi, **Manaqib al-Imam Amir al-Mu'minin**, pp. 2:15/hadith 503; Sheikh al-Mufid, **Kitab al-Irshad** 1:126; Ibn Shahr'ashub, **Manaqib** 2:336-7; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 21:5; al-Maqrizi, **Imta' al-Asma'** 11:279; al-Halabi, **al-Sirah al-Halabiyyah** 2:735.
2. Ibn Tawus, **al-Tara'if**, pp. 56/hadith 52; al-Tabari, **Dhakha'ir al-'Uqba**, pp. 73; Ahmad ibn anbal, **al-Musnad** 5:333; **Sahih al-Bukhari** 5:77; **Sahih Muslim** 7:122.

Upon hearing this name, the Jew said to his folks: "*You will be most certainly defeated. I swear this by what was revealed to Moses."*[1]

Finally, the Jews in the fortress came out to face ‘Ali (as). The first one who came out and faced him was al-Harith, the brother of Marhab, one of their most celebrated brave men. Upon seeing him, the Muslims retreated and none remained in the field except ‘Ali (as). The two men exchanged strikes and fought for some while until ‘ Ali (as) was able to kill al-Harith. Thus, the Jews ran off and fortified themselves inside the fortress. Then, Marhab - one of the heroes and most courageous fighters of the Jews - came out to face Imam Ali (as) after he had put on two armours, girded himself with two swords, tied his head with two turbans, and carried a three-headed spear. The two fighters struck each other, but ‘Ali’s strike on Marhab’s head was so effective that it cut lengthwise the rock that Marhab had pierced and put on his head, cut the iron hood, and split Marhab’s head into two halves so deeply that the sword reached his jaw.

Once the Jews saw what had befallen their hero, they ran away and closed the gate of the fortress. Advancing towards the gate, Imam Ali (as) tried to open it until he succeeded. The Jews had dug a ditch around the fortress. The majority of the Muslim soldiers had not yet crossed that ditch because of its depth; so, Imam Ali (as) plucked out the great gate of the invincible fortress and used it as a bridge over the ditch so that the soldiers would cross, occupy the fortress, and gather the spoils of war.[2]

It is reported that a group of men helped each other to move that gate, but they could not.

Ibn Amr is reported to have said:" *We were not surprised at the conquest of Khaybar by Allah at the hands of ‘Ali, but what astonished us was that ‘Ali plucked out the gate of the city and threw*

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1. **Ibn Shahr'ashub, Manaqib** 3:153; Ibn Tawus, **al-Tara'if**, pp. 57/hadith 53; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 39:3; Ibn Hisham, **al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah** 3:798; Ibn 'Asakir, **Tarikh Madinat Dimashq** 42:89-91; Ibn Kathir, **al-Bidayah wa’l-Nihayah** 7:373; al-Maqrizi, **Imta' al-Asma'** 11:289; al-Halabi, **al-Sirah al-Halabiyyah** 2:737.
2. Al-Maqrizi, **Imta' al-Asma'** 13:333; al-Salihi al-Shami, **Subul al-Huda wa’l-Rashad** 5:125-7; al-Halabi, **al-Sirah al-Halabiyyah** 2:737-8.

it forty cubits away behind him[1]*. As forty men tried to carry that gate, they failed."* When the Holy Prophet (sawas) was informed of that, he commented: "*I swear by Him Who grasps my soul; there were forty angels helping 'Ali carry and throw that gate."*

In his famous epistle to Sahl ibnHunayf, Imam Ali (as) says:

"By Allah (I swear this), I did not pluck out the gate of Khaybar and throw it behind me forty cubits away due to a physical power or a nutritional diet; rather, I was aided by a divine power and a soul illumined by the illumination of its Lord. My position to Ahmad (i.e. the Holy Prophet Muhammad) is the same as the position of illumination to illumination."[2]

7. Imam 'Ali in the Conquest of Makkah

After all these events, quiet and tranquillity reigned in the atmosphere that surrounded the polytheists of Quraysh and the Muslims. Although the Holy Prophet (sawas) committed himself to the articles of the al-Hudaibiyah Pact, the people of Quraysh were willing to breach it, because they assumed that the Muslims had become weak after their defeat in the Battle of Mu'tah. Due to this belittlement of the Muslims by the polytheists of Quraysh, they worked against the allies of the Holy Prophet (sawas) from the clans of Khuzah; they therefore instigated their allies from the clans of Banu-Bakr against these clans of Khuzah and a number of skirmishes took place between the two parties, resulting in the overcoming of the Banu-Bakr over the Khuzah with the help of the Quraysh. As a result, the Quraysh breached the al-Hudaibiyah Pact and waged war against the Muslims.

In his turn, the Holy Prophet (sawas) decided to wage war against the people of Quraysh, declaring his famous saying, "If I refrain from supporting the Khuzah, then may victory never be given to me!" Secretly, the Holy Prophet (sawas) started preparing for this matter, butHatib ibn Abi-Baltah leaked the secret out by writing a letter to the chiefs of the polytheists of Makkah informing them about the Holy

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1. Cubit is an ancient unit of length approximately equal to the length of the forearm.
2. Sheikh al-Saduq, **al-Amali**, pp. 604/hadith 839 & 840; al-Nayshaburi, **Rawdat al-Wa'izin**, pp. 127; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 21:26/hadith 24 & 25.

Prophet's military advancement towards them. He sent that letter with a woman and ordered her to hide it. However, before the woman passed the outskirts of al-Madinah, Divine Revelation informed the Holy Prophet (sawas) about the whole matter, and the Holy Prophet (sawas) immediately ordered Imam 'Ali (as) and al-Zubair ibn al-awam to follow the woman and bring the letter back. He ordered them to hurry so that they would catch the woman before she escaped them. A few miles away from al-Madinah, Imam 'Ali and al-Zubair caught the woman. First, al-Zubair interrogated her about the letter, but the woman denied it and cried. So, al-Zubair felt pity for her and returned to tell Imam 'Ali (as) that she was innocent.

Imam 'Ali (as) answered him, "How come that the Messenger of Allah has told us that this woman is carrying a letter with her, while you claim that she carries nothing?!"

Having unsheathed his sword, Imam 'Ali (as) threatened her until finding the letter on her. As he returned to the Holy Prophet (sawas), he gave him the letter.

Once the Holy Prophet (sawas) accomplished the necessary preparations and equipment required for his journey to Makkah, he gave his standard to 'Ali (as) and distributed the other pennons among the chiefs of the tribes. Thus, he started his journey to Makkah.

Finally, the polytheists of Quraysh realized that they were too weak to face the Holy Prophet (sawas) and the Muslims accompanying him. They therefore had no other choice than that each one of them should enter his house and comply with the exemption from punishment that the Holy Prophet (sawas) had declared for those who would keep themselves in their houses.[1]

It is worth mentioning that Sa'd ibn asbadah, a chief of the Ansar, is reported to have had in his hand one of the Holy Prophet's standards. When Sa'd passed by Abu-Sufyan who was standing in a straight opening of a valley (on the way to Makkah), the latter asked: *"Who are these?"*

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1. Makkah was conquered by the Muslims in the month of Ramadan of the year AH 8. See **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:323.

"They are the Ansar, headed by Sa'd ibn asbadah who is carrying their standard," he was told.

When Sa'd adjoined with Abu-Sufyan, he shouted: *"Abu-Sufyan! Today is the day of fierce massacre. Today, the inviolabilities will be violated. Today, Allah has disgraced Quraysh."*

When Sa'd passed and the Holy Prophet (sawas) adjoined Abu-Sufyan, he shouted at him: *"O Allah's Messenger! It seems that you have ordered your folks to be killed! When Sa'd and his companions passed by me, they claimed that they will kill us, because they shouted, 'Today is the day of fierce massacre…!' I adjure you in the name of Allah to regard your folks, for you are the kindest and the most merciful of all people and you are the best of all those who regard their relatives."*

Answering Abu-Sufyan, the Holy Prophet (sawas) said: *"Sa'd did not say the truth. This day is the day of the great mercy. This day, Allah will honour Quraysh. On this day, Allah will ennoble the Ka'bah. This day, the Ka'bah will be adorned."*

Furthermore, the Holy Prophet (sawas) sent 'Ali (as) to Sa'd ibn asbadah to take the standard from him and enter the city of Makkah carrying it.[1]

Imam Ali; the Destroyer of the Idols

Imam 'Ali (as) is reported to have related the following:

One day, the Holy Prophet (sawas) and I advanced towards the Ka'bah to destroy the idols. When we were there, he asked me to sit down so that he would climb on my shoulders. I thus sat to the side of the Ka'bah. I tried my best to stand up carrying him, but he

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1. In this section dedicated to the conquest of Makkah, I have tried to combine the historians' reports about the different stages of the great conquest of Makkah with the role played by Imam 'Ali ('a) in this conquest; therefore, I have embarked upon brevity. For further information about the conquest of Makkah, refer to the following reference books: Sheikh al-Mufid, **Kitab al-Irshad** 1:130-7; Ibn Hisham, **al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah** 4:851-64; **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:323-4; Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 2:239-54; Ibn Kathir, **al-Bidayah wa'l-Nihayah** 4:317-34; al-Maqrizi, **Imta' al-Asma'** 13:373-9; al-Halabi, **al-Sirah al-Halabiyyah** ¾-22.

felt that I had shown some inability. He therefore sat down and I climbed on his shoulders. Once he raised me up, I felt as if I had the ability to touch even the sky. I then went up the Sacred House on the surface of which there was a copper statue fixed with iron bars. The Holy Prophet (sawas) asked me to deal with it; so, I began to move from its right, left, and foresides until I could displace it. Whenever I tried to move it, the Holy Prophet (sawas) would say to me, "Yes! Yes!" He (sawas) then asked me to drop it down. Once I did, the statue broke up just like the breaking up of flasks. I then went down.[1]

8. Imam 'Ali in the Campaign ofHunayn

As Allah the Almighty decided victory and conquest for His Messenger by permitting him to enter Makkah and making all the tribes therein subservient and obedient to him, the tribes of Hawazin and Thaqif defied him and entered into alliance against him. They thus decided to take the initiative and attack the Muslims before they would invade them. When he was informed of this, the Holy Prophet (sawas) prepared for facing them, recruited the Muslim warriors who were then more than twelve thousand soldiers, supplied them with arms, and left Makkah.

When the Muslim army drew near the position of the enemy, the Holy Prophet (sawas) put them in lines and distributed the standards among the commanders and the chiefs of the tribes. As usual, it was Imam 'Ali (as) who bore the standard of the *muhajirun*.[2]

However, the warriors of Hawazin had already planned a strategy to surprise the Muslims unexpectedly; so, they waylaid them in the cols of one of the valleys of Tihamah, a location which was inevitable that the Muslim soldiers would pass.

When the Muslims came down Valleyunayn, the battalions of Hawazin overtook them by surprise from all sides. The Banu-Sulaim

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1. Sulayman al-Kufi, **Manaqib al-Imam Amir al-Mu'minin** 2:606/hadith 1105; Ibn Shahr'ashub, **Manaqib** 2:155; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 38:76-7; Ibn Abi-Shaybah, **al-Musannaf** 8:534/hadith 9; al-Hakim al-Nayshaburi, **al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn** 2:367; al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, **Tarikh Baghdad** 13:304; al-Khawarizmi, **Manaqib**, pp. 123/hadith 139.
2. **Tafsir al-Qummi** 1:285-6; Ibn Sa'd, **al-Tabaqat al-Kubra** 2:150.

battalion, which was in the fore of the Muslim army, absconded, causing all others to follow suit. As the Muslims were deceived by their huge number, Allah the Almighty left them alone to face their enemy. Thus, none stayed with the Holy Prophet (sawas) except a very few warriors from the Banu-Hashim tribe and Ayman ibn 'Ubayd.[1]

Like a giant, Imam Ali (as) stood steadfastly, striking the enemies with his sword from all directions; so, whoever dared to draw near the Holy Prophet (sawas), would be immediately struck down by 'Ali's sword. Confidence was regained by some Muslim warriors because of the Holy Prophet's resolution and Imam Ali's defence, as well as those who remained with him, who consequently, re-attacked the enemy. Abu-Jarwal, the standard-bearer of the Hawazin army and one of their brave men advanced for fighting. So, the soldiers tried to escape him and none of them were brave enough to face him except for the hero of Islam, 'Ali (as), who challenged and killed him. This scene planted horror in the minds of the polytheists and, at the same time, planted enthusiasm in the minds of the Muslims. Finally, the Muslim warriors applied their swords to the necks of the warriors of Hawazin and their allies, killing some and taking others as prisoners.[2]Imam 'Ali (as) was the foremost of the Muslim soldiers, having been reported to have killed forty warriors of the enemy. Thus, the battle ended with victory for the Muslims.[3]

9. Imam 'Ali and the Battle of Tabuk

When the Holy Prophet (sawas) was informed that the Romans were planning to invade the Arabian Peninsula, he made all necessary preparations to face them. Depending upon his wisdom and insight, the Holy Prophet (sawas) arranged, a very masterful strategy for this

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1. **Tafsir al-Qummi** 1:287; Ibn Sa'd, **al-Tabaqat al-Kubra** 2:150-1; **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:347.
2. The Battle of Hunayn took place in the month of Shawwal of the year AH 8. See Ibn Sa'd, **al-Tabaqat al-Kubra** 2:149 and **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:344.
3. Sheikh Al-Mufid, **Kitab al-Irshad** 1:142-4; Ibn Shahr'ashub, **Manaqib** 3:169-70; al-Irbali, **Kashf al-Ghummah** 1:222-3; al-Waqidi, **al-Maghazi** 2:209.

encounter and a suitable number of soldiers and arms.[1] As he studied the situation very carefully, he concluded that the encounter required that he in person should be at the head of the Muslim army. Concerning the internal affairs of the Islamic state, the political and military circumstances proved that matters were not completely reassuring, because it was very likely that the hypocrites and the agitators who lived in al-Madinah would commit acts of sabotage in the absence of the Holy Prophet (sawas). In light of these probabilities, the matter required that one who enjoyed high qualifications and eligibility, as well as consummate wisdom, detailed acquaintance with the particulars of all of the affairs, and enough care for the Islamic belief should stay in the capital of the Islamic state so as to face any emergency. The Holy Prophet (sawas) chose Imam ‘Ali (as) to carry out this decisive mission and to represent him in his absence.

Addressing Imam ‘Ali (as), the Holy Prophet (sawas) said: "‘Ali*, al-Madinah cannot be kept aright except by your or my presence in it."*

When the Holy Prophet (sawas) marched towards Tabuk, the hypocrites could not stand that ‘Ali (as) would be at the head of the local authority in the capital of the Islamic state. As the situation enraged these hypocrites, who knew for sure that the capital would be kept in safe hands so long as ‘Ali (as) was in charge of its affairs and that he would cut off any of their illegal aspirations, they started spreading rumours that the Holy Prophet (sawas) appointed ‘Ali (as) as his successor, only because he hated him and wanted to get rid of him. This act of agitation astounded ‘Ali (as) in the same way as when the polytheists of Quraysh had falsely accused the Holy Prophet (sawas) of insanity and sorcery.

When Imam ‘Ali (as) was informed of these rumours and he decided to prove them false, exposing the reality of the agitators, he took his sword and arms and joined the Holy Prophet (sawas). "O Allah’s Messenger," ‘Ali (as) said: *"The hypocrites claim that you have left me behind you in the city for no other reason than that you hate me and find me unbearable. Is this true?"*

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1. The Battle of Tabuk took place in the month of Rajab of the year 9 AH. See **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:373.

Answering him, the Holy Prophet (sawas) said:

"Go back to your place. In fact, al-Madinah cannot be kept aright except by your or my presence in it. You are verily my representative among my family members, my representative in the abode of my migration, and my representative among my people. O 'Ali! Does it not please you that you are to me is as exactly as (Prophet) Aaron was to (Prophet) Moses, except that there shall not be a prophet after me?"

So, 'Ali (as) returned and the Holy Prophet (sawas) continued his journey.[1]

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1. Sheikh Al-Mufid, **Kitab al-Irshad** 1:154-6; al-Irbali, **Kashf al-Ghummah** 1:227-8; 'Allamah al-Hilli, **Kashf al-Yaqin**, pp. 145-6; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 21:207-8/hadith 1; **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:367-8; al-Hakim al-Nayshaburi, **al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn** 2:337.
These words of the Holy Prophet are famously known as hadith al-manzilah (Tradition of the Position). The chains of authorities that reported this hadith are so many that the hadith can be described (according to the criteria of the scholars of 'ilm al-hadith) as mutawatir; meaning, uninterruptedly reported, and as mashhur; meaning, famous. Furthermore, from this hadith, we can notice obviously that the Holy Prophet (sawas) declared openly Imam 'Ali's Imamate and unmatched excellence and virtue. As for Prophet Aaron, he was a natural brother of Prophet Moses, while Imam Ali (as) was not so for the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sawas). Secondly, Prophet Aaron was a prophet of Allah Who sent him along with his brother Moses to guide Pharaoh to the true religion, as is told in the Holy Qur'an, but Imam Ali (as) was not a prophet, as is informed by the Holy Prophet (sawas) in this hadith. So, the only similarity between Prophet Aaron and Imam 'Ali with regard to the earlier's position to his brother Prophet Moses and the latter's position to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sawas) is that Imam Ali (as) should be the representative and successor to the Holy Prophet (sawas). About this similarity, the Holy Qur'an quotes Prophet Moses as saying, *"...And give to me an aider from my family; Aaron, my brother. "*(20:29-30)" On another occasion, the Holy Qur'an says, *"And Moses said to his brother Aaron: Take my place among my people.* (7:142).
In view of this clear statement of the Holy Prophet (sawas), Imam Ali (as) should be the successor to and heir of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sawas).
For more information, see the following reference books: Sheikh al-Kulayni, **al-Kafi** 8:107/hadith 80; Sheikh al-Saduq, **al-Amali**, pp.

10. Imam ‘Ali Conveys Surah Bara'ah

Continuing his blessed mission of propagating Islam, the Holy Prophet (sawas) spread the new religion all over the territories of the Arabian Peninsula. At the same time, his military forces chased the remnants of the polytheists. As the ninth year after his migration was about to elapse, Islam had an independent political entity, a nation whose individuals were linked together with strong ties, a wide land, and invincible borders. Thus, the powers of polytheism had no longer formed any threat against the Muslims; it was therefore necessary to eliminate the remnants of the enemy. At that time, the Holy Prophet (sawas) received Surah Bara'ah (i.e. al-Tawbah, No. 9), which comprised the laws that identified his attitude to the polytheists and the pledges, pacts, and alliances he had concluded and made with them.

The best place for declaring this new decision and reading this divine formal statement was definitely the Holy House of God; i.e. the Holy Ka'bah. Likewise, the best timing for the declaration was the tenth of Dhu’l-Hijjah during which the polytheists of the Arabian Peninsula gathered around the Ka'bah for performing the rituals of the pilgrimage. Seizing this opportunity, the Holy Prophet (sawas) sent Abu-Bakr to Makkah as his representative for leading the rituals of the Hajj pilgrimage and conveying the resolutions revealed in Surah Bara'ah to the people.

However, when Abu-Bakr reached a placed called Dhu’l-Halifah, which is currently known as Masjid al-Shajarah, Divine Revelation came to the Holy Prophet (sawas) and ordered him to entrust the mission of conveying Surah Bara'ah to Imam ‘Ali (as) and to dismiss Abu-Bakr. Carrying out this divine decree, the Holy Prophet (sawas) summoned ‘Ali ibn Abi-Talib (as) and ordered him to go after Abu-Bakr, taking the Qur'anic verses from him, and conveying them to the people.

238/hadith 252; Ibn Shu'bah al-Harrani, **Tuhaf al-Uqul**, pp. 430; Sulayman al-Kufi, **Manaqib al-Imam Amir al-Mu'minin** 1:499; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, **al-Musnad** 1:170, 3:32, 338, and 6:369; **Sahih al-Bukhari** 4:208 and 5:129; **Sahih Muslim** 7:120-1; and **Sunan Ibn Majah** 1:45/hadith 21; **Sunan al-Tirmidhi** 5:302/hadith 3808 and 304/hadith 3813 as well as many other reference books of Islamic history and Prophetic traditions.

Having ridden on the Holy Prophet's female-Camel, Imam 'Ali (as) left al-Madinah and headed towards Makkah to catch Abu-Bakr in midway. As soon as Abu-Bakr heard the growl of the female camel, he knew it and thought that the Holy Prophet (sawas) had come after him. He thus went out with panic and saw 'Ali (as) in front of him. So, 'Ali (as) took the Qur'anic verses from him, while Abu-Bakr returned to al-Madinah.

As Abu-Bakr feared lest the Divine Revelation had carried something infuriating about him to the Holy Prophet (sawas), he asked: *"O Allah's Messenger! Has anything been revealed about me?"*

Alleviating him, the Holy Prophet (sawas) answered: *"No! Yet, I have been ordered that none should convey that message except me or a man who is part of me."*

Imam 'Ali (as) hurried towards Makkah and when the people gathered by the Holy Ka'bah to perform the rituals of the pilgrimage, Imam 'Ali (as) recited before them the first verses of Surah Bara'ah. Commenting on these verses, he shouted, "From this year on, no polytheist is allowed to enter Makkah, no naked person is allowed to circumambulate the Holy House, and every pact that had been concluded with the Holy Prophet (sawas) is valid up to its expiry time and no more."[1]

11. Imam 'Ali in Yemen

In order to accomplish the mission of promulgation for Islam, the Holy Prophet (sawas) entrusted Khalid ibn al-Walid and a group of his Companions (*Sahabah*) with the mission of inviting the Hamdan tribe to Islam. Although Khalid remained there for six months, he could not achieve any success in his mission and could not persuade the people of Hamdan into accepting Islam as religion. Khalid finally sent a courier to the Holy Prophet (sawas) to inform him of his failure in the mission.

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1. Sulayman al-Kufi, **Manaqib al-Imam Amir al-Mu'minin**, pp. 22/hadith 5111; Sheikh al-Saduq, **'Ilal al-Shara'i** 1:190/hadith 3; al-Tabari, **Dhakha'ir al-'Uqba**, pp. 69; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, **al-Musnad** 1:3; **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:382-3; al-Hasakani, **Shawahid al-Tanzil** 1:305-15; Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 2:291.

Then, the Holy Prophet (sawas) sent for ‘Ali ibn Abi-Talib (as) and ordered him to replace Khalid in this mission, asking him to return to al-Madinah, and keep whomever he wished with him.

Al-Bara' ibn 'Azib is reported as saying: I accompanied Khalid to the quarters of the Hamdan tribe and we remained there for six months, inviting them to Islam, but they refused to respond. After that, the Messenger of Allah (sawas) sent ‘Ali (as) and ordered him to send Khalid back to al-Madinah to replace him in the mission. I remained with ‘Ali’s brigade. When we drew near the people of Hamdan, they came out to meet us. ‘Ali (as) then led us in a congregational prayer after which he lined us up in one line. He then advanced forward and read the letter of the Holy Prophet (sawas) in which he invited these people to accept Islam. Accordingly, the entire tribe of Hamdan accepted Islam; so, ‘Ali (as) sent a letter to the Holy Prophet (sawas), carrying this good news to him. Once he received the news, the Holy Prophet (sawas) prostrated himself before God. When he raised his head from prostration, he said, "Peace be upon the Hamdan tribe."[1]

The Holy Prophet (sawas) is reported to have sent ‘Ali (as) on another mission to Yemen, to invite the Midhhaj tribe to Islam. Three hundred horsemen were with Imam ‘Ali (as) in this expedition when the Holy Prophet (sawas) handed him over the standard, dressed him in the turban, and instructed him that he should not fight them unless they started fighting first.

Imam ‘Ali (as) entered the quarters of the Midhhaj tribe, inviting them to Islam, however, they refused and shot the Muslims with arrows and stones. Imam ‘Ali (as) then prepared his companions for fighting, and attacked the people of Midhhaj, killing twenty of their men. As they went in different directions and ran away, Imam ‘Ali (as) left them.

When he invited them to Islam once more, they accepted. A number of their chiefs swore allegiance with him and said, "We are

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1. Sheikh al-Mufid, **Kitab al-Irshad** 1:61-2; Ibn Shahr'ashub, **Manaqib** 2:148; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 38:71/hadith 1; **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:389-90; Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi’l-Tarikh** 2:300; al-Halabi, **al-Sirah al-Halabiyyah** 3:264-5.

responsible for those who follow us. You may now take the right of Allah from our properties."

As Imam 'Ali (as) collected the duties, he took out the one-fifth share (*khumus*) and distributed the remainder among his companions. When he was informed about the Holy Prophet's journey to Makkah to perform the Hajj pilgrimage, he rushed to catch him in Makkah.[1]

In this regard, Imam 'Ali (as) is reported as saying:

When the Messenger of Allah (sawas) decided to send me to Yemen, I said to him, "O Allah's Messenger! You are sending me to judge between the people while I am too young to have enough experience in judicature."

The Holy Prophet (sawas) put his hand on my chest and prayed to the Almighty, saying: *"O Allah! Please, confirm his tongue (when he speaks) and guide his heart (to the truth)."*

Teaching me, the Holy Prophet (sawas) further said: *"When the two parties of a lawsuit present themselves before you, you should not issue a verdict before you listen to both of them in the same way. If you do so, it will be easy for you to issue a fair judgment."*

Imam 'Ali (as), commenting on this advice, said;

By Allah I swear this: since then, I could master the job of judgment and I have never suspected any issue.[2]

It is also reported that some men who were members of Imam 'Ali's brigade complained about him because he was too strict in distributing things among their beneficiaries. When the Holy Prophet (sawas) was informed about this complaint, he said: *"O people! Never complain against 'Ali. I swear by Allah, that 'Ali is too strict in the affairs appertained to Allah to be complained of."*

'Amr ibn Shas, a man from the Aslam tribe, is reported to have said:

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1. Ibn Sa'ad, **al-Tabaqat al-Kubra** 2:169-70; Ibn Sayyid al-Nas, **Uyun al-Athar** 2:340; al-Halabi, **al-Sirah al-Halabiyyah** 3:224-5.
2. Ahmad ibn Hanbal, **al-Musnad** 1:111; al-Hakim al-Nayshaburi, **al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn** 3:153; Ibn Kathir, **al-Bidayah wa'l-Nihayah** 5:123-4.

I was a soldier in the brigade that 'Ali (as) led to Yemen by the command of the Holy Prophet (sawas). In Yemen, I became furious at him.[1]

One day after we returned to al-Madinah, I came to the mosque where the Holy Prophet (sawas) was sitting. Once he noticed that I was looking furiously at 'Ali (as), he kept looking at me until I took a seat. He (sawas) then said to me: *"O Amr! You have indeed hurt me!"*

I said: *"We are Allah's and to Him shall we return. I seek refuge with Allah and Islam against causing harm to the Messenger of Allah."*

The Holy Prophet (sawas) said: *"Whoever hurts 'Ali, has in fact hurt me."*[2]

12. Imam 'Ali on the Day of Mubahalah

The chief priests and wise men of the Christians of Najran[3] held a meeting to discuss the content of a letter that they had received from the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sawas), inviting them to convert to Islam. However, they could not reach a decisive opinion, because they had already had religious instructions confirming the advent of a prophet after Prophet Jesus (as). Besides, all indications and signs confirmed that Muhammad (sawas) was the awaited prophet. They therefore decided to send a delegation to meet and converse with Muhammad (sawas) in person.

Although the Holy Prophet (sawas) received the large delegation of the Christians hospitably, he seemed to be displeased because their appearance showed slogans of paganism. They were clad in silk brocade, wearing golden trinkets and adorned themselves with crosses on their necks.

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1. Al-Hakim al-Nayshaburi, **al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn** 3:134.
2. Al-Nu'mani, **Sharh al-Akhbar** 1:154/hadith 99; al-Tabari, **Dhakha'ir al-'Uqba**, pp. 65; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 21:360/hadith 1; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, **al-Musnad** 3:483; al-Hakim al-Nayshaburi, **al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn** 3:122; Ibn Kathir, **al-Bidayah wa'l-Nihayah** 5:121.
3. Najran is a city situated to the southwest of the Arabian Peninsula, near Yemen.

Having noticed this, they left and revisited the Holy Prophet (sawas) changing their appearance totally; so, the Holy Prophet (sawas) welcomed, respected, and allowed them to practice their rituals.

He (sawas) then presented Islam to them and recited some Qur'anic verses before them. Yet, they refused to accept the new religion and entered into a great deal of argumentation. The matter on which the two parties agreed was that they should exchange invocations of God's curse upon each other, and God would definitely pour His curses on the lying party. In fact, it was Allah the Almighty Who instructed the Holy Prophet (sawas) to use this method (which is known as *Mubahalah*) with them. The two parties agreed to meet in a public place the next day to conclude the matter.[1]

The next day, the Holy Prophet (sawas) went out carrying al-Hussain and holding al-Hassan with his hands, while his daughter Fatimah and his cousin 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib walked behind him, complying with the command of Allah the Almighty, which was revealed in the Holy Qur'an that reads:

﴿فَمَنْ حَآجَّكَ فِيهِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَكَ مِنَ ٱلْعِلْمِ فَقُلْ تَعَالَوْا۟ نَدْعُ أَبْنَآءَنَا وَأَبْنَآءَكُمْ وَنِسَآءَنَا وَنِسَآءَكُمْ وَأَنفُسَنَا وَأَنفُسَكُمْ ثُمَّ نَبْتَهِلْ فَنَجْعَل لَّعْنَتَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَى ٱلْكَـٰذِبِينَ﴾

"If anyone disputes in this matter with thee, now after full knowledge has come to you, say: "Come! Let us gather together our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves. Then, let us earnestly pray and invoke the curse of Allah on those who lie!"[2]

Except for these four persons, the Holy Prophet (sawas) did not allow any others to be with him in order to prove to everybody the truth of his prophet-hood and messenger-ship.

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1. **Tafsir al-Qummi** 1:104; Ibn Sa'ad, **al-Tabaqat al-Kubra** 1:357.
2. *Surat Al-Imran, 3:61.*

Upon seeing this situation, the archbishop of Najran shouted at his companions: *"O Christians! In fact, I can see before me such godly faces that even if they beseech God to remove a mountain from its place, He will definitely respond to them. Do not enter with them in this matter, because if you do, you will perish and no single Christian person will remain on the surface of the earth."*

All Muslim sects, including the Khawarij (or *Kharijites*; a deviant sect who mutinied against Imam 'Ali's authority due to a political background), unanimously agreed that the Holy Prophet (sawas) did not invite to participate in the *Mubahalah* matter any person except his daughter Fatimah al-Zahra' who represented '*our women*'mentioned in the verse of *Mubahalah*, his two grandsons al-Hassan and al-Hussain who represented '*our sons*' mentioned therein, and his brother Imam 'Ali (as) who represented '*Ourselves*' and whose position to him was just like Prophet Aaron's position to his brother Prophet Mouses.

Unavoidably and undeniably, these five persons are the only ones to whom the holy verse of *Mubahalah* refers, and no one else can have any part in this virtue. In other words, anyone who is familiar with the history of Islam knows for sure that the verse of the *Mubahalah* was aimed at these five people and no one else.[1]

The Holy Prophet (sawas) took his daughter Fatimah, her two sons al-Hassan and al-Hussain, and her husband 'Ali as his partners against the Christians of Najran in the procedure of invoking God's curse on the lying party; and he won against those who had challenged his veracity and truthfulness.

He took with him these four persons (who, along with the Holy Prophet, are known as the (*Ahl al-Bayt*) and no one else. All of his wives were in their chambers, but he did not take any one of them with him. Likewise, he took with him for this imprecation neither Safiyyah his father's full sister, nor Ummu-Hani' his uncle's honourable daughter, nor any of the women of the three C*aliphs*,or the *Muhajirun* and A*nsar*.

1. Sayyid 'Abd al-Hussain Sharaf al-Din, **al-Kalimah al-Gharra'**, pp. 181.

Similarly, as the Holy Prophet (sawas) took with him al-Hassan and al-Hussain the two chiefs of the youths of Paradise, he did not call for any of the sons of the Hashemite or the *Sahabah*.

As he (sawas) chose 'Ali (as) to accompany him in this imprecation, he did not bring with him any of his close relatives or the *foremost vanguards*; i.e. the *Muhajirun* and the *Ansar*.[1]

The Outlines of the Holy Prophet's Efforts

The Holy Prophet (sawas), who had always worried himself about the progress of the Islamic mission and the best way to convey it to the human world, exerted all possible efforts to promulgate for the religion and build such an invincible and principled community that would survive all circumstances so that Islam would be prevalent everywhere on the globe. For the sake of achieving these goals, the Holy Prophet (sawas) focused his efforts on achieving two major goals:

First, he worked toward enlightening the Muslim community to such an extent that would help its individuals understand, learn, and be able to practice the Islamic life exactly as required by Allah the Almighty. In the course of achieving this, Imam 'Ali (as) played the most effective role, since he was always at the side of the Holy Prophet (sawas) who was busy expanding the Muslim community.

Second, the Holy Prophet (sawas) cared very much for educating an elite group inside the Muslim community. Supporting the Holy Prophet (sawas) in this grand mission, Imam 'Ali (as) played a major

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1. In footnote number 106 of his book al-Nass wa'l-Ijtihad, Sayyid Sharaf al-Din writes: "This narration has been mentioned by all of the exegetes of the Holy Qur'an, scholars of the Prophet's traditions, biographers of the Holy Prophet (sawas), and Muslim historiographers, as well as every historian who chronicled the events of the year 10 AH."
For more information about the incident of the imprecation, refer to the following reference books: **Tafsir al-Qummi** 1:104; **Tafsir Furat**, pp. 86/hadith 63; al-Nu'mani, **Sharh al-Akhbar** 2:339-40;/hadith 680; Sheikh al-Mufid, **Kitab al-Irshad** 1:167-86; al-San'ani, **Tafsir al-Qur'an** 1:122; al-Tabari, **Jami' al-Bayan** 3:407; **Tarikh al-Ya'qubi** 2:82; Ibn Kathir, **al-Bidayah wa'l-Nihayah** 5:64-5; al-Maqrizi, **Imta' al-Asma'** 14:69.

role and contributed greatly to activating and setting in motion this unstopable and unbreakable mission.

In this field, the Holy Prophet (sawas) worked on qualifying the elite persons whom Allah the Almighty had chosen for the position of leadership so that these privileged ones would succeed the Holy Prophet (sawas) in his absence, lead the Muslim community and the Islamic mission aptly, and protect them from deviation and distortion. The Holy Prophet's qualifiers were focused on both levels, i.e. being a part of leading the Muslim Ummah and in administrative matters.

As the members of the Holy Prophet's household (i.e. the Ahl al-Bayt) were the chosen ones, the Holy Prophet (sawas) prepared Imam 'Ali (as) for assuming the leadership of the Islamic Ummah after him; he therefore gave him a share in all key, crucial, and difficult situations and educated him such a special education no one else had received.

In this respect, Imam 'Ali (as) is reported to have said:

"The Messenger of Allah (sawas) has taught me one thousand fields of knowledge; and each field of them leads to other one thousand fields."[1]

Because of the high qualifications and credentials that 'Ali (as) enjoyed, he won the ultimate confidence of the Holy Prophet (sawas) in words and deeds.

As has been mentioned earlier, the Holy Prophet (sawas) took 'Ali (as) since formative years, caring for and rearing him so closely, that 'Ali (as) was always present with the Holy Prophet (sawas) throughout his lifetime.

A little while after the advent of Islam, the Holy Prophet (sawas) declared that he had taken 'Ali (as) as his brother and aid in his promulgation for the new religion. On more than one occasion, the Holy Prophet (sawas) repeated this declaration. That was not all;

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1. Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari, **Dala'il al-Imamah**, pp. 235; Sheikh al-Mufid, **Kitab al-Irshad** 1:34; Sayyid Ibn Tawus, **al-Tara'if**, pp. 136; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 22:461/hadith 10; Ibn 'Asakir, **Tarikh Madinat Dimashq** 42:385; Ibn Kathir, **al-Bidayah wa'l-Nihayah** 7:396.

rather, he appointed 'Ali as his representative and successor in all of his affairs except Prophethood.

When the features of Imam 'Ali's futuristic personality were clearly revealed before the Muslims, the Holy Prophet (sawas) started to designate him to do the missions that no one except the Holy Prophet (sawas) himself or someone having the ability to represent themselves perfectly was allowed to do, such as replacing him and spending that night on his bed (in order to give the assassinators the impression that the Holy Prophet was still there), giving back the depositories to the owners who had kept them with the Holy Prophet, and leading the women of Banu-Hashim on their journey to Yathrib.

Among the other features of the Holy Prophet's special interest for Imam 'Ali (as) during his crucial stage in age, was that he refused to enter the city of Yathrib before 'Ali (as) could join him. So, the Holy Prophet (sawas) remained in Quba waiting for Imam 'Ali (as).

Another feature of this special interest was the mission of conveying the resolutions of Surah Bara'ah to the people. Although he had entrusted Abu-Bakr with this mission, the Holy Prophet (sawas), by a command of the Almighty, sent 'Ali (as) and ordered him to take the mission from Abu-Bakr and ask him to return to al-Madinah. 'Ali did what the Holy Prophet had told him to do and conveyed the new resolutions to the people perfectly.

Even when the Holy Prophet (sawas) was forced to face the enemies militarily, he did not give the standard to any person expect 'Ali (as). Moreover, he used to choose 'Ali for dealing with the most difficult and hard-to-solve problems and situations that required high qualifications. So, 'Ali (as) always solved these problems and dealt with these situations perfectly.

As Islam entered a new stage after Imam 'Ali (as) had excelled all other *Sahabah* (i.e. companions of the Holy Prophet) in sincerity, profound faith, and wholehearted devotion to the principles of the religion, the Holy Prophet (sawas) began to affirm the significant position that is occupied by the Ahl al-Bayt(as) with regard to the mission of Islam. He also declared that he would continue to exist as long as these persons existed and that he loved and care for them very much. The Holy Prophet (sawas) also declared that 'Ali (as) was

illustriously distinguished from all others, especially after the Holy Qur'an had strengthened his attitude in this regard, saying:

﴿قُل لَّآ أَسۡـَٔلُكُمۡ عَلَيۡهِ أَجۡرًا إِلَّا ٱلۡمَوَدَّةَ فِي ٱلۡقُرۡبَىٰ﴾

"Say (O Muhammad, unto mankind): I ask of you no fee therefore, save loving kindness among kinsfolk."[1]

Furthermore, the Holy Prophet (sawas) mentioned that ‘Ali (as) and the members of his household were purified from all material and spiritual filth so thoroughly[2] that he prohibited any person to pass by the Mosque while being ceremonially unclean except for ‘Ali (as).[3]

In fact, the Holy Prophet (sawas) never stopped directing the Muslim masses to adhere to Imam ‘Ali (as), ordering them to love and resort to him whenever they would face unsolvable problems, and explaining to them the reasons for the imperative necessity of recognizing the personality of Imam ‘Ali (as) with regard to such fields of excellence like deep faith, self-denial for the sake of Allah, and vast knowledge of the Holy Qur'an, the Islamic mission, and the teachings of the Holy Prophet (sawas). For this reason, we can put our hands on numerous Prophetic traditions praising and mentioning the excellencies and virtues of Imam ‘Ali (as), such as: *"‘Ali is the most versed of all of you in the field of judicature and fair judgment,*[4] *"‘Ali*

1. Sheikh al-Saduq, **al-Amali**, pp. 208/hadith 230; Sheikh al-Tusi, **al-Amali**, pp. 89/hadith 138; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 10:141; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, **al-Musnad** 1:331; **Sahih Muslim** 7:130; **Sunan al-Tirmidhi** 5:30/hadith 3258.
2. Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari, **Dala'il al-Imamah**, pp. 236; Ibn Tawus, **al-Tara'if**, pp. 516; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 40:87; Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 1:15.
3. Al-Kulayni, **al-Kafi** 7:424/hadith 6; Sheikh al-Saduq, **al-Amali**, pp. 63/hadith 25; al-Maghribi, **Sharh al-Akhbar** 2:310/hadith 636; al-Khawarizmi, **Manaqib**, pp. 82/hadith 67; al-Muttaqi al-Hindi, **Kanz al-'Ummal** 11:614/hadith 32977.
4. Ibn al-Halabi, **Isharat al-Sibq**, pp. 54; al-'Ajaluni, **Kashf al-Khafa'** 1:162/hadith 489; **Tafsir al-Qurtubi** 15:162.

is the most knowledgeable of all of you,"[1] and: "‘Ali *is the most upright of all of you…*"[2]

The purports of these Prophetic traditions were practically proven as true through innumerable incidents and events.

In his last ritual of Islam (i.e. the Hajj pilgrimage), the Holy Prophet (sawas) chose ‘Ali (as), other than any other Muslim, to be his partner. So, they both participated in slaughtering an animal as an offering to the Holy Ka'bah, which is one of the rites of the ritual Hajj pilgrimage. In order to attract all attention towards this special virtue, the Holy Prophet (sawas) stated it openly before all Muslims.

All these steps were within the Holy Prophet’s program of preparing Imam ‘Ali (as) for the next leadership and paving the way for decorating him with the medal of Imamate and succession to Prophet-hood (i.e. caliphate). Thus, once he accomplished the rituals of his last Hajj, which is known as the Farewell Pilgrimage, the Holy Prophet (sawas) halted at a place to affirm in the presence of all Muslims that he would soon depart this life and before that, he would leave behind him ‘Ali as the leader and referential authority of the Muslim community. Of course, this declaration was initially issued and decided by Allah the Almighty.

Eventually and under the supervision of the Holy Prophet (sawas), all Muslims swore allegiance and paid homage to Imam ‘Ali (as) as their next leader and the commander of the faithful believers. Consequently, Divine Revelation came down to the Holy Prophet (sawas) to declare the perfection of the divine grace and the completion of the religion.

13. Imam ‘Ali in the Farewell Pilgrimage

With overwhelming joy and heartfelt exultation, the Muslims looked forward to attending the unprecedented devotional-political meeting with the Holy Prophet (sawas) whose procession started moving on the last days of the month of Dhu’l-Qa'dah towards Makkah for

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1. Al-Kulayni, **al-Kafi** 7:424/hadith 6; al-Sharif al-Radi, **Khasa'is al-A'immah**, pp. 84.
2. Al-Ganji, **Kifayat al-Talib**, pp. 245; al-Khawarizmi, **Manaqib**, 111/hadith 1200.

performing the rites of the ritual Hajj pilgrimage and meeting the Muslim crowds who, raising the same pennon and repeating the same divine slogan, came from all of the districts of the Arabian Peninsula for the same purpose; that is, performing the ritual Hajj and meeting the Holy Prophet (sawas).[1]

All these crowds raised their voices with these words:

"*Here I am responding to You, O Allah, here I am. Here I am, there is no partner with You, here I am. Surely, praise, grace, and kingship are Yours. There is no partner with You. Here I am responding to You."*[2]

Before he started his journey to Makkah, the Holy Prophet (sawas) had sent a letter to Imam ‘Ali (as) who was in Yemen, asking him to join him for performing the ritual Hajj together. Upon receiving the letter, Imam ‘Ali (as) left Yemen at once, carrying with him the spoils of war that he had gained there, and met the Holy Prophet (sawas) who was about to enter the city of Makkah. Once his eyes fell on the Holy Prophet (sawas), Imam ‘Ali (as) rejoiced and informed him of the details of what he had achieved in Yemen. This achievement filled the Holy Prophet (sawas) with joy.

Asking ‘Ali, the Holy Prophet (sawas) said: *"In which way have you consecrated yourself for the performance of the Hajj?"*

Answering, Imam ‘Ali (as) said*: ‘O Allah! Please accept my intention to be the same as the intention of Your Prophet.’ Thus, I have driven with me thirty-four sacrificial animals."*

"Allah is the Most Great (Allahu-akbar)!" said the Holy Prophet: *"I have driven with me sixty-six sacrificial animals. So, you will be my partner in my pilgrimage, my rituals, and my sacrifice. Therefore,*

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1. According to some historians, those who participated in the Farewell Pilgrimage with the Holy Prophet (s) were ninety thousand Muslims, while other historians hold that they were one hundred and twenty thousand, excluding the inhabitants of Makkah, its suburbs, Yemen, and other neighbouring districts. For further information, see al-Halabi, **al-Sirah al-Halabiyyah** 3:308.

2. (labbayka allahumma labbayka, labbayka la sharika laka labbayka, inna alhamda walnni'mata laka walmulka, la sharika laka labbayka).

remain in your state of ritual consecration and return to your army. Then, hurry with them to me so that we may meet in Makkah, if Allah wills."

Before that, when he reached the environs of Makkah, Imam 'Ali (as) had come ahead of his army and appointed one of his soldiers to be their commander during his absence.[1]

Imam 'Ali (as) was in the company of the Holy Prophet (sawas) when he accomplished all of the rituals of Hajj and 'Umrah pilgrimages and when he said: *"The whole region of Mina is considered a legal place for the ritual sacrifice."*[2] Thus, the Holy Prophet (sawas) slaughtered with his noble hand sixty-three animals and 'Ali (as) slaughtered thirty-seven, so that the total would be one hundred sacrificial animals. After that, the pilgrims gathered around the Holy Prophet (sawas) who delivered a general speech, in which he preached and gave them advices.[3]

As all of the rituals to be performed in Mina were accomplished by the Holy Prophet (sawas) and the Muslims, he returned to the city of Makkah, circumambulated the Holy Ka'bah for the last time (which is ceremonially known as *tawaff al-wada'*:the Farewell Circumambulation) and then headed for al-Madinah.

14. Imam 'Ali; the Commander of the Believers

After he had accomplished the rites of the Hajj pilgrimage, the Holy Prophet (sawas), accompanied by great numbers of Muslims, was on his way back to al-Madinah when he reached a region where there was a rivulet (*Ghadir*) known as Ghadir Khumm. At that place, which is situated near al-Juhafah - and where the crossroads begin and people cross different ways, some to al-Madinah, or Iraq and some to

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1. Sheikh Al-Mufid, **Kitab al-Irshad** 1:171-2; al-Tabarsi, **I'lam al-Wara bi-A'lam al-Huda** 1:259-60; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 21:384/hadith 10. See also: Ibn Sa'd, **al-Tabaqat al-Kubra** 2:188; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, **al-Musnad** 1:39; **Sahih al-Bukhari** 5:111; **Sahih Muslim** 4:37.
2. One of the rites of the ritual Hajj pilgrimage is to slaughter an animal as an offering and sacrifice for Allah the Almighty.
3. Ibn Kathir, **al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah** 4:381-2; al-Halabi, **al-Sirah al-Halabiyyah** 3: 330.

Egypt- Divine Revelation came to the Holy Prophet (sawas). It came to convey to him the following most important declaration:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلرَّسُولُ بَلِّغۡ مَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيۡكَ مِن رَّبِّكَۖ وَإِن لَّمۡ تَفۡعَلۡ فَمَا بَلَّغۡتَ رِسَالَتَهُۥۚ وَٱللَّهُ يَعۡصِمُكَ مِنَ ٱلنَّاسِۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَهۡدِي ٱلۡقَوۡمَ ٱلۡكَٰفِرِينَ﴾

"O Messenger! Make known that which hath been revealed unto thee from thy Lord, for if thou do it not, thou wilt not have conveyed His message. Allah will protect thee from mankind. Lo! Allah guided not the disbelieving folk."[1]

It was the eighteenth of Dhu'l-Hijjah when the Holy Prophet (sawas) received this divine command, ordering him to declare 'Ali as the leader of the Muslims and to convey to them the divine command of designating him to the next leadership and general guardianship over all of them and that it would be obligatory upon all of them to obey him. Furthermore, Allah the Almighty, within this statement, reassured that He would save His Prophet from the evils of the malicious and envious.

The vanguards of the Muslims were about to reach al-Juhafah when the Holy Prophet (sawas) ordered them to come back and join him in the same way as he ordered the rear part to hurry to join him in the place that had never been resided in by anyone including the Holy Prophet (sawas), who himself would have never chosen it as a place of temporary residence, had he not received the order through the Divine Revelation.

When the crowds of the Muslims gathered there, the Holy Prophet (sawas) stood amongst them and said loudly so that everyone could hear him:

"It seems that I have been invited by Allah and I will definitely respond. So, I am leaving behind me amongst you two weighty things; i.e. the Book of Allah and my family members; i.e. my Household. Verily, these two shall never depart one another until they both join me at the Divine Pond… Surely, Allah is my master,

1. *Surat Al-Maedah, 5:67.*

and I am the master of every believing man and woman…"

He then took 'Ali (as) by the arm and declared:

"As for everyone who has considered me as his master, 'Ali is now his master. O Allah, (please) be the friend of whomever befriends 'Ali, be the enemy of whomever incurs his animosity, bear love to whomever loves 'Ali, harbor hatred against whomever hates 'Ali, give victory to whomever supports 'Ali, disappoint whomever disappoints 'Ali, and turn the truth to follow 'Ali wherever he turns. Behold! The present must convey this to the absent."

Before the crowds of Muslims left, the angel of revelation came down to the Holy Prophet (sawas), carrying with him the following holy verse:

﴿ٱلْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِى وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ ٱلْإِسْلَـٰمَ دِينًا﴾

"This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favour unto you, and have chosen for you as religion AL-ISLAM."[1]

Immediately, the Holy Prophet (sawas) declared: *"Most Great be Allah for the completion of the religion, perfection of the grace, and pleasure of the Lord with me as His messenger and with Ali as the leader of the Muslims after me."*

Subsequently, the Muslims began to congratulate Ali (as) for being the commander of the believers. Amongst the companions of the Holy Prophet (sawas) who congratulated Ali (as) for this divine designation were Abu-Bakr and 'Umar, each of whom said to him: *"Felicitations, O son of Abu-Talib! You have become the master of me and the master of all believing men and women!*[2]

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1. *Surat Al-Maedah, 5:3.*

2. Sheikh al-Mufid, **Kitab al-Irshad** 1:174-7; al-Tabarsi, **I'lam al-Wara bi-A'lam al-Huda** 1:261-3; al-Irbali, **Kashf al-Ghummah** 1:23 & 238; al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, **Tarikh Baghdad** 8:284/hadith 4392; al-Hasakani, **Shawahid al-Tanzil** 1:200-3/hadith 210-3; Ibn Kathir, **al-Bidayah wa'l-Nihayah** 7:385-6; Ibn al-Sabbagh, **al-Fusul al-Muhimmah**, pp. 40-1.
If fact, it was the special care of Allah the Almighty that made this hadith spread out so widely that it became on everybody's lips so that it would

It is also reported that the Holy Prophet (sawas) ordered that a tent be installed so that Imam Ali (as) would sit under it to receive the groups of the Muslims who should come to and address him as *amir al-mu'minin*; i.e. the commander of the believers. So, all Muslims, including the Holy Prophet's wives and the Muslim women, came, swore allegiance to, and greeted Imam Ali (as) by saying: "*assalamu aslayka ya amir al-mu'minin*", as was ordered by the Holy Prophet (sawas).[1]

15. The Prophet's Successor Faces Challenges after the Ghadir Khumm Declaration

The Muslims began to spread the Ghadir Khumm declaration of Imam Ali (as) as the next leader of the Muslims and the Holy Prophet's words: "*As for everyone who has considered me as his*

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serve as an overwhelming evidence, proving Imam 'Ali's Imamate, leadership of the Muslim community, and religious and political succession to the Holy Prophet (sawas). For this reason, Allah the Almighty ordered His Prophet (sawas) to convey this divine command to the Muslims who had crowded there, immediately after the accomplishment of the rites of the ritual Hajj pilgrimage. Thus, one after another, Qur'anic verses were revealed to the Holy Prophet (sawas), ordering him to affirm the leadership of Imam 'Ali (as) and to designate him to the office of the coming leadership of the Muslim community. That was not all; the Divine Revelation told him not to be afraid of the people! As the Holy Prophet (sawas) ordered those present to convey this news to the absent, he wanted that all people, who were about one hundred thousand persons, would narrate this declaration. About this famous tradition, which is known as hadith al-ghadir, many books have been compiled, as all historians of Islam and biographers of the Holy Prophet and the Ahl al-Bait (as) have put the tradition into circulation. In fact, this hadith has been so uninterruptedly reported that it has been classified as mashhur; meaning, well-known. Because the hadith is so authentic in its chain of authorities that it is impossible to refute or give lie to it, some people tried to misinterpret its purport and give a wrong idea about its meaning. However, to have further information about the hadith's chains of authorities, different texts, and the circumstances under which it was issued by the Holy Prophet (sawas), it is advisable to refer to the Encyclopedia of Ghadir, written by 'Allamah al-Amini.

1. Sheikh Al-Mufid, **Kitab al-Irshad** 1:176; al-Tabarsi, **I'lam al-Wara bi-A'lam al-Huda** 1:262.

master, Ali *is now his master*," al-Harith ibn al-Nu'man al-Fihri came to the Holy Prophet (sawas) who was at al-Abtuh, rode off his riding animal, hobbled it, advanced towards the Holy Prophet (sawas) who was in the middle of a group of his companions, and said: *"O Muhammad! You ordered us to bear witness that there is no god save Allah and that you are the messenger of Him, and we accepted that from you. You then ordered us to…*" The man mentioned all the pillars of Islam, and then said*: "All that did not satisfy you until you extended the arm of your cousin, preferred him to all of us, and declared, 'As for everyone who has considered me as his master, Ali is now his master!' Is this from your own self or from Allah?"*

Answering him, the Holy Prophet (sawas) said: *"By Allah except Whom there is no god, (I swear this); it was a command of Allah."*

Upon hearing this, al-Harith turned his face towards his riding animal while he was murmuring with these words: *"O Allah! If this be indeed the truth from You, then rain down stones on us or bring on us some painful doom."* Before al-Harith could reach his riding animal, Allah the Almighty cast on him a stone that fell on his head and went out from his anus.

About this incident, Allah the Almighty revealed these verses:

﴿سَأَلَ سَآئِلٌ بِعَذَابٍ وَاقِعٍ﴾

"A questioner questioned concerning the doom about to fall."[1]

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1. Sayyid Ibn Tawus, **al-Tara'if**, pp. 152-3/hadith 235; al-Hilli, **al-'Udad al-Qawiyyah**, pp. 185-6/hadith 17; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 8:6-7/hadith 10; **Tafsir al-Tha'labi** 10:35; al-Hasakani, **Shawahid al-Tanzil** 2:381-2/hadith 1030 & 1031; Ibn al-Sabbagh, **al-Fusul al-Muhimmah**, pp. 41-2; al-Halabi, **al-Sirah al-Halabiyyah** 3:337. The incident is also written down in the following reference books: Fara'id al-Simtayn by al-Hamawini; Ma'arij al-Wusul, Durar al-Simtayn by al-Zarandi al-Hanafi; Jawahir al-'Iqdayn by al-Samhudi; Tafsir al-'Ammari; Tafsir al-Sharbini; Fayd al-Qadir by al-Mannawi; al-Sirah al-Halabiyyah by al-Halabi; Sharh al-Jami' al-Saghir by al-Hafni al-Shafi'i; Sharh al-Mawahib al-Ludaniyyah by al-Zarqani; and Nur al-Absar by al-Shabalnaji. Besides, the details of those who have reported this incidents can be found in 'Allamah al-Amini's The Encyclopedia of Ghadir.

16. The Holy Prophet's Attempts to Secure Imam Ali's Leadership

The Holy Prophet (sawas) had full familiarity with what would happen to the Muslims after his demise, because he regarded attentively the social and political diseases and disorders that had befallen his community. He also knew for sure that the first blow would be levelled at the principled line whose foundations had been established by him with the help of his brother 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib and at the leadership that he had many times confirmed to have power over the state of Islam after him; lest the correct line of the Islamic mission and the true propagation for it would not continue. Another reason for the Holy Prophet's anticipation of the future of Islam was the existence of many personalities around the Holy Prophet (sawas), while their one and only intention was to derive as much benefit as possible from Islam and to seize the opportunity of their closeness to him in order to lead this great entity, which the Holy Prophet (sawas) had built with big sacrifices. Of course, the designation of Ali (as) to the next leadership of the Muslim community threatened the interests of these people; therefore, they would most certainly try their best to prevent this it.

The Holy Prophet (sawas) also feared lest Islamic law would turn into something other than the one revealed to him by Allah the Almighty and that the fake law would be subservient to the whims and desires of certain people. The best example of the Holy Prophet's fears was the incident of al-Harith ibn al-Nu'man al-Fihri who came to deny the Holy Prophet's preference of his brother and cousin, Imam 'Ali (as), over all others.

In order to clarify the matter and prevent all these pessimistic anticipations, the Holy Prophet (sawas) declared his distinctive standpoint to the line of true Islam through several stages and means. For instance, on more than one occasion, he used to say to his companions, "*If you allow 'Ali to be your leader, though I see coming that you would not do, you will find him a true guide and well-guided. He will most surely lead you to the straightest path.*"[1]

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1. Abu-Na'im, **Hilyat al-Awliya'** 1:64; al-Hasakani, **Shawahid al-Tanzil** 1:83-4/hadith 102.

Sa'd ibn abadah is reported to have said in the presence of a big crowd of people, "By Allah I swear this: I have heard the Messenger of Allah (as) saying: *'When I pass away, all desires will be led astray after me and the people will turn back on their heels. When that happens, the truth will be with 'Ali."*[1]

The famous Prophetic tradition that is known as *hadith al-thaqalayn* (Narration of the Two Weighty Things) is additional proof on the necessity of abiding by the leadership of Imam 'Ali (as), following his course (which is true guidance), and keeping loyalty to him, so as to ensure sound faith and immunity against deviation.[2]

Subsequently, the Holy Prophet (sawas) started a new plan to complete the Divine command of designating 'Ali (as) to the leadership of the Muslim community. In order to save the course of the Islamic mission from deviation from the straight path, the Holy Prophet (sawas) mobilized a huge army that included all the persons whom he expected to force themselves upon the political scene, in order to compete with Imam 'Ali (as), on assuming political power and leadership of the Muslim nation.

17. The Holy Prophet's Final Ailment and the Expedition of Usamah to Syria

In fact, the life of Imam 'Ali (as) was the same as the life of the Holy Prophet (sawas) and they shared the same existence in relation to the Islamic mission. The most important and difficult situations that Imam 'Ali (as) adopted with regard to the clashes, crises, and turning

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1. Al-Shirazi, **Kitab al-Arba'in**, pp. 228.
2. Sheikh al-Saduq, **al-Amali**, pp. 55/hadith 687; Sulayman al-Kufi, **Manaqib al-Imam Amir al-Mu'minin** 2:112/hadith 604; al-Fattal al-Nayshaburi, **Rawdat al-Wa'izin**, pp. 273; Sheikh al-Tusi, **al-Amali**, pp. 162/hadith 268; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 65:22/hadith 37; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, **al-Musnad** 3:14, 17 & 4:271; Ibn Abi-Shaybah, **al-Musannaf** 7:176/hadith 5; al-Hakim al-Nayshaburi, **al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn** 3:148; **Tafsir al-Tha'labi** 9:186; Ibn 'Asakir, **Tarikh Madinat Dimashq** 19:258.
Although the hadith al-Thaqalayn tradition has been reported through such numerous and various chains of authority that it has been classified as mutawatir (uninterruptedly reported) and mashhur (famous), the aforesaid reference books seem to be sufficient to prove its authenticity.

points that took place in the progress of the propagation of Islam, showed the climax of bravery and courage in his support for the Holy Prophet (sawas) up to the last moments of the Holy Prophet's blessed life. These situations reveal the actual scope of closeness, connection, and decisive adherence between the two; i.e. the Holy Prophet (sawas) and Imam 'Ali (as).

Moreover, through the Qur'anic verses, Prophetic sayings, and historical events, we can easily understand that Imam 'Ali (as) was the natural extension of the Holy Prophet (sawas), the most qualified for leading the Muslim community after him, and there was no other person who could assume this great mission except for Imam Ali (as).

As the Holy Prophet (sawas) entrusted Imam 'Ali (as) with the secrets of Prophet-hood and the details of his divine message, he burdened him with the charge of watching over and protecting it. Because of the confidence that the Holy Prophet (sawas) had in Imam 'Ali (as), he even assigned to him the mission of arranging his funeral and burying his dead body. He knew for sure that 'Ali (as), and none else, would carry out all of his instructions and would never deviate from them even in a hairbreadth, also never hesitating to fulfil them even for a twinkling of an eye. The Holy Prophet (sawas) did not put this degree of confidence in any persons other than Imam 'Ali (as).

Moreover, the Holy Prophet (sawas) cared very much about declaring Imam 'Ali (as) as the next leader and his heir who would take his place after his passing away; he therefore continued declaring such statements openly and suggestively on various occasions and under all circumstances, including the last moments of his blessed life.

Upon his return from the Farewell Pilgrimage, the Holy Prophet (sawas) spent a few days in the blessed city of al-Madinah before being terribly ailed. On the days of his ill health, he used to say, "I am still feeling the pain of the poisoned food that I had eaten in Khaybar. It seems that this is the time of the severance of my aorta because of that poison."[1]

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1. **Sahih al-Bukhari** 5:137; al-Hakim al-Nayshaburi, **al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn** 3:58; Ibn Kathir, **al-Bidayah wa'l-Nihayah** 5:246; al-Halabi, **al-Sirah al-Halabiyyah** 3:457.

Visiting their ailed Prophet, the Muslims came in successive groups, all being preoccupied by worry and grief on one hand and confusion and perplexity in regards to the next days and the destiny of the Islamic mission on the other. At these moments, the Holy Prophet (sawas) foretold them that he would very soon pass away; therefore, he guided them to that which would secure for them the survival of the Islamic mission and help them achieve prosperity, good fortune, and success. He thus repeated these words before them:

"O people! My soul is about to be grasped swiftly and to be sent to the heavens. I have already instructed you to hold fast to what will secure your felicity, so that I will be excused. Verily, I am leaving amongst you the Book of Allah and my progeny; my household."

Very frequently, he took 'Ali by the arm and said:

"'Ali is with the Qur'an and the Qur'an is with 'Ali. They will not separate from one another until they join me at the Pond."[1]

Thus, the Holy Prophet (sawas) willed very much to end his efforts fruitfully, paving the way, and smoothing progress in the designation of Imam Ali (as) as his successor, away from the influence of the competing powers, the plots of the malicious, and the conspiracies of the deviant. Historians have unanimously agreed that the Holy Prophet, during the last days of his blessed lifetime, had no bigger concern than that of mobilizing an army, including the greatest number of Muslims, such as Abu-Bakr, 'Umar, and the chief personalities of the *Muhajirun* and *Ansar*. He then appointed Usamah ibn Zaid[2] as their commander, ordering him to move to the north boarders of the Arabian Peninsula, while exempting Imam Ali (as) from joining the same expedition.

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1. Sheikh al-Tusi, **al-Amali**, pp. 479/hadith 1045; al-Irbali, **Kashf al-Ghummah** 2:35; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 22:476/hadith 26; al-Qanaduzi, **Yanabi' al-Mawaddah** 1:124/hadith 56. See also Ibn Hajar, **al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah**, pp. 124-6.

2. Usamah ibn Zaid is reported to have been only eighteen or twenty years old when the Holy Prophet (sawas) appointed him as the commander of an army that included the chief personalities of his Companions. See al-Halabi, **al-Sirah al-Halabiyyah** 3:228.

However, a number of the *Sahabah* did not like the matter and chose not to appeal to the Holy Prophet's order; therefore slacking in carrying out his command, refusing to leave al-Madinah, while making unconvincing excuses. Their tongues spoke plainly, words of burning criticism and ill-mannered objections in regards to Holy Prophet appointing Usamah as their commander.

Having been informed about their words, the Holy Prophet (sawas), although terribly ill and suffering from harsh pains, went out, delivered a speech to them, and urged them to join the army of Usamah.[1] While the Holy Prophet (sawas) was delivering his speech, signs of agitation and inflexibility could clearly be seen on his face. He then went on insisting on joining Usamah's expedition and getting everyone to go ahead towards the destination, saying, "Mobilize the army of Usamah! Carry out my orders in this regard! May Allah curse whoever fails to join the army of Usamah!"[2]

In fact, this decision of the Holy Prophet (sawas) is too strange to be ignored without further investigation. Although the Holy Prophet (sawas) was very ill and knew that his last moments of his blessed lifetime were upon him, he insisted determinedly on sending Usamah's army to its destination. Thus, if any one of those whom the Holy Prophet (sawas) had ordered confirmedly to join the army and be under the commandership of Usamah had had any importance to be considered in the state of the Holy Prophet's passing away, he would have most surely excluded him from joining that army. What is stranger is that some of the *Sahabah* deliberately failed to carry out the Holy Prophet's order; and did not join Usamah's army, as if there wasa hidden conspiracy to be executed by them.[3]The suspicious

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1. Al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 21:410-1; Ibn Sa'd, **al-Tabaqat al-Kubra** 2:189-90.
2. Al-Maghribi, **Da'a'im al-Islam** 1:41; 'Ali ibn Yunus al-'Amili, **al-Sirat al-Mustaqim** 2:296; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 30:427; al-Shahristani, **al-Milal wa'l-Nihal** 1:23; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 6:52; al-«ji, **al-Mawaqif** 3:650.
3. What confirms this fact is that the Sahabah who refused to leave al-Madinah with Usamah's army feared lest the same situation that had taken place before their departure for the Campaign of Tabuk when the Holy Prophet (sawas) appointed Imam 'Ali (as) as his representative in al-

initiatives of these *Sahabah*, alerted the Holy Prophet (sawas) into figuring out that they were planning a perfidious conspiracy against his Household the Ahl al-Bayt(as), awaiting evil turns of fortune to them, and consensually agreeing on depriving them of their right to succeed the Holy Prophet (sawas) in his religious and political powers. For this reason, the Holy Prophet (sawas) decided to protect his community from deviation and guard his people against falling into seditious matters. He therefore wanted to make a new attempt to strengthen and confirm the next leadership of Imam Ali (as) over them. So, he said to them, "Bring me a pen and a paper so that I will write down for you a document after which you will never go astray."

However, they disputed about carrying out this order of the Holy Prophet (sawas)! While it is terribly loathsome for any people to dispute in the presence of their prophet! Then, they said, "What is the matter with him? Is he hallucinating? Inquire him about it!" As they repeated these statements before him, the Holy Prophet (sawas), scolding them, said, "Leave me alone! What I am suffering is very much better than what you are asking me to do."

However, the Holy Prophet (sawas) gave them THREE final instructions: "(1) Take out the polytheists from the Arabian Peninsula, (2) Permit the delegations as same as I used to do, and…(3)"

Here, the reporters held their tongues and did not mention the third instruction! Of course, they did so deliberately and on purpose. Yet,

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Madinah and then declared his famous saying of considering Ali's position to him to be as same as Prophet Aaron's position to his brother Prophet Moses would be repeated here. Of course, such a matter would have been a sufficient reason for provoking the spirit of rebellion against the Holy Prophet's orders, not to mention the incentives of envy that they had already had in their characters. Moreover, these Sahabah realized that this time, the matter would carry more dangerous dimensions that would be further than a simple question of joining Usamah's army and leaving al-Madinah, especially after they had seen the Holy Prophet (sawas) insist on their departure and exclude 'Ali (as), while signs of death were obvious on his face. Besides, the Holy Prophet (sawas), in the last few days, used to repeat these words: "I am about to be invited (to the heavens) and I am about to respond."

some of them said, "As for the third… Well! I have forgotten the third!"[1]

Generally the majority of the historians -of the early period of Islam-, and in particular with regards to this incident, have narrated this incident in this very ambiguous way; i.e. they mention the first two final instructions of the Holy Prophet (sawas) and omit the third, claiming that it was forgotten by the reporters! However, it seems that they pretended to have forgotten the third instruction, so that they would avoid the anger of the rulers, who *dressed themselves* with the caliphate after the passing away of the Holy Prophet (sawas), while no reporter of the Holy Prophet's traditions had ever forgotten or missed any single word or action of him, to such an extent that these reporters recorded even the number of his breaths. How is it then possible for them to forget his third final instruction, although they who were present with him, when he said these words, were so many that they formed a crowd, to bid him farewell?! At these moments, those people were eagerly waiting for any single word he would say so that it would appease them and supply them with hope for the future. Without question, if this third Prophetic instruction had not had anything to do with his past instructions of appointing 'Ali (as) as the next leader of the Muslim community, none of these reporters would have forgotten or feigned inattention to it.[2]

18. Imam 'Ali with the Holy Prophet in His Last breaths

The Holy Prophet (sawas) fainted due to the intensification of his ailment. When he recovered consciousness, he said, "Call my brother and companion." Immediately, he fell weak again; so, 'A'isha said, "Send for Abu-Bakr." Similarly, Hafsah said, "Send for 'Umar."

When these two were present before the Holy Prophet (sawas), he said, "Leave! I will send for you if I need you."[3]

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1. Ibn Sa'd, **al-Tabaqat al-Kubra** 2:242; **Sahih al-Bukhari** 5:137; **Sahih Muslim** 5:74-5; **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:436; Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 2:320; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 13:30-1; Ibn Kathir, **al-Bidayah wa'l-Nihayah** 5:247; al-Maqrizi, **Imta' al-Asma'** 14:447-8.
2. Hashim Ma'ruf al-Hasani, **Sirat al-A'immah al-Ithnay'ashar** 1:255.
3. **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:439.

Then, his brother 'Ali (as) was sent for, to be in his presence. When 'Ali (as) arrived, he drew close to the Holy Prophet (sawas), who then gave him a sign; and 'Ali (as) threw himself on the Holy Prophet (sawas) while he confided his secrets to him for a long time. Then, the Holy Prophet (sawas) felt extremely ailed, as death came upon him. When his soul was about to depart his body, he said to Imam 'Ali (as), "Put my head in your lap, for the matter of Allah has come. When my soul departs my body, pick it up and rub it over your face. You may then turn me towards the kiblah direction and undertake the other procedures. Before all people, you may offer a prayer on my dead body. Do not leave me before you put me in my grave. Always seek the help of Allah the Almighty."[1]

Thus, the Holy Prophet (sawas) moved to the vicinity of His Lord satisfied and pleased, after he had conveyed his message, carried out his mission perfectly, and made clear for his people the path that they should take after him. During all these stages, 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib (as) was always by his side, as he kept close to him just like his shadow and imitated him in all of the moments of his blessed and principled lifetime, just like a diligent student's imitation of his teacher.

1. Sheikh al-Mufid, **Kitab al-Irshad** 1:186-7.

SECTION THREE

It Comprises Of Four chapters:

Chapter One
The Era Of Imam ‘Aliibn Abu Talib (As)

Chapter Two
Imam ‘Ali (As) During the Reign of Abu Bakr

Chapter Three
Imam ‘Ali (As) During the Reign of Omar

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Imam ‘Ali (As) During the Reign of Othman

CHAPTER ONE
THE ERA OF IMAM 'ALI IBN ABI-TALIB (AS)

Mourning for the Holy Prophet (sawas):

In the very last moment of his life, the holy Prophet (sawas) had no one but 'Ali (as) and the other members of the family of Hashim around him. The people came to know about the death of the holy Prophet (sawas) by hearing the mourning and crying of his family members. In hearing the mourning, they ran towards the mosque in fear and gathered outside of it, still only hearing voices of weeping and mourning.

At this time, the people suddenly noticed very strange movements by Omar. He, after coming out from the holy Prophet's room (sawas), raised his sword in the air and said: Some people are saying that the holy Prophet (sawas) has passed away from this world. I swear by God that the Prophet (sawas) has not died, but alike Musa bin Imran (Moses), the prophet (sawas), he has just gone to meet his God[1]. Omar was very anxious, till the arrival of Abu-Bakr[2] and his entrance in the house of the holy Prophet (sawas). When Abu Bakr entered the house and drew the cloth from the Prophet's (sawas) face, he rushed out and said: Those who worship the Prophet (sawas) should understand that the Prophet (sawas) has passed away from this world, and those who believe in God must know that he never will die. Then he recited a verse from the Holy Qur'an which says: Muhammad is but a messenger;][3] other [messengers have passed before him.[4] If he dies or is slain, will you turn back on your heels? Anyone who turns back on his heels (disbelieve in Allah again) will not harm Allah in the least, and soon Allah will reward the grateful.

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1. **Al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** :323-324.
2. **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:442.
3. *Surat Al-Imran, 3:144.*
4. **Al-Tabaqat al-kubra** 2:367-370, **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:442-444. **al-kamil fi Tarikh** 2:323-324.

Then Abu Bakr along with Omar and Abu Ubaideh bin Jarrah went out of the house of the Prophet (sawas). They left him with 'Ali (as) and his family members who, because of mourning for him, had forgotten everything else. 'Ali (as) and his household managed to take care of the necessary things for his burial. At the same time, the Ansar came together in the house of Bani Sa'ideh for thinking on the problem of succession of the holy Prophet (sawas).

The Qurayshian raiding the Partisans (Ansars) in Saqifah:

As soon as Omar was informed about the gathering of Ansars in the Saqifah, he went to the house of the holy Prophet (sawas), calling Abu Bakr. Abu Bakr refused to come out saying that he was busy. Omar, for the second time, sent for him, saying that a very important incident had occurred and that his presence was very important. Hearing this, Abu Bakr came out and met Omar. Then agreeing with Omar, Abu Ubaideh and some other persons, they left for Saqifah. When they reached, they found a large gathering of Ansars there. When these people entered, Sa'ad bin Ibadah became very afraid of their arrival. The Ansars were also astonished and quiet. These three persons tricked and influenced the gathering so quickly that it seemed that they were reading the minds of Ansarsand they were aware of their hidden intentions.

Omar wanted to say something but Abu Bakr did not let him because he was aware of Omar's rough and quarrelling manner. Abu Bakr sensed the sensitivity of the time. Also he was well aware of revengefulness of the people present. It was very important that in such a time, one should use his political tricks and speak very softly to overcome the situation; this being far better than disputes and quarrels.

Abu Bakr started talking very skilfully and his tone of his voice was apt. He addressed the Ansars in a kind way and did not use a single harsh word which could have caused discord among the gathering. He said: We, the migrants, were the very first people who accepted Islam. Our families were the greatest among all the families and played a vital role. The greatest persons were from amongst us, and we are known as the nearest relatives of the holy Prophet (sawas). You, Ansars, are our religious brothers and you are the partners in our religion. You assisted the religion of Allah

and devoted yourselves for this purpose. May God provide you with a good result for your good deeds! We are like chiefs and you are like our viziers. We will never do anything without your suggestion and will never do anything without your help.

Hubab bin Munzar said: O the people of Ansar! Deal with the government yourselves because the other people live under your shelter and no one has the power to do anything against you, nor can they do anything without suggestion. You are the honourable and powerful people who form the majority of the Muslims. You are famous for your bravery and the people will look at and accept what you do. If the people still do not accept your words, then you will have to introduce a ruler from your side and we will introduce one from ours.

Omar said: It is impossible. There cannot be two kings in one kingdom. I swear by God that the Arabs whose prophet (sawas) was not from amongst you, will never accept your kingship, but they will undoubtedly accept the government of those among whom the prophecy was found. Now, who wants to fight us in this regard, although we are known as the friends and relatives of the holy Prophet (sawas)?!

After Omar had finished his words, Hubab bin Munzar once again started saying: O the people of Ansar! Be careful about what you are going to do. Do not listen to him and his friends because they will snatch your rights. If they do not accept your government, throw them out of the city because you are more suitable for succession of the prophet (sawas) than others. The people accepted Islam under your shelter. I am a reliable backer for this affair. And I am like a lion in a jungle full of lions. I swear by Allah! If you wish, I am critical. The people thought that a battle would arise between the two parties. Abu Ubaideh bin Jarrah stepped forward to prevent any fighting and loss. He addressed to Ansari in a very quiet manner, saying: O people of Ansar! You were the first ones who helped the Prophet (sawas) and provided the Muslims with shelter. Therefore, be sure not to be among those who wanted to change the tradition. I will raise my sword and change everything according to your wish.

The atmosphere became very tense, as an evil was close to transpiring, but then a sudden interference occurred.

Abu-Ubaideh al-Jarrah, trying to overcome the situation, raised and defended the migrants. He said: O people of Ansar! Remember that Muhammad (sawas) was from Quraysh and these people (pointing at Omar, Abu Bakr and Abu Ubaideh) are more suitable for this post. I swear by God that I do not have any kind of disagreement with them on this matter. When the three migrants saw that the people had been divided into two groups, each of them pushed forward the other two for succession to the prophet (sawas), but they found that from the point of religion none of them was suitable for this post and had no predominance over others.

Abu Bakr said to the people: Omar and Abu Ubaideh are present here. You can swear your allegiance with any of them if you want. And Omar immediately said to Abu Ubaideh: Bring your hand ahead so that I swear my allegiance to you because you are a reliable person for this nation. On the other hand, Abu Bakr said to Omar: Draw your hand ahead so that I swear my allegiance to you. Omar replied: You are better than me. Abu Bakr said: But you are stronger than me. Omar replied: You have the greatness and it is suitable that my strength should be used for your greatness. Now, stretch your hand forward so that I swear my allegiance to you. As soon as Abu Bakr moved his hand forward to allow Omar and Abu Ubaideh to swear their allegiance to him, Bashir bin Sa'ad (from amongst Ansars) swore his allegiance to Abu Bakr before anyone else. When Hubab bin Munzar saw this, he cried to Bashir and said: Bashir you have done a very unnecessary and unpleasant thing. Were you jealous of the caliphate of your cousin?

When the Bani Owais saw the act of Bashir as well, they came to know that Bani Khazraj wanted Sa'ad bin Ubadah to be the caliph, Usayd bin Haseer (one of their leaders) said to his men: I swear by God that if only for once Bani Khodhir comes into power, they will dominate you forever. Therefore, stand up and swear your allegiance

to Abu Bakr. And in this way, Sa'ad and Bani Khazraj were defeated and the partisans of Usayed swore their allegiance to Abu Bakr.[1]

Some of the Ansar said that they would only pay their allegiances for ‘Ali bin Abi Talib (as).[2]

Then the people who came with Abu Bakr, and the groups who had sworn their allegiance to him, raised him on their shoulders like a groom, taking him to the mosque.[3] It was at a time when the dead body of the Prophet (sawas) was still not buried. Omar was walking ahead of Abu Bakr. He was shouting and excited talking so loudly that foam was coming out of his mouth. He was also surrounded by his partisans. Everyone had put a Sin'ani cloak on. When they passed anyone, they would beat him and put him forward to swear allegiance to Abu Bakr, whether willing or not.[4]

The documents of Quraysh's partisans against Ansar in Saqifah were two things:

•The migrants were the first to announce their Islam.

•They were the nearest relatives of the holy Prophet (sawas).

By the abovementioned points, these people condemned themselves, because, as they said, succession and caliphate belonged to the first ones who brought Islam or those ones who were the nearest relatives of the Prophet (sawas), as then it becomes the right of no other one but ‘Ali Ibn Abi Talib(as); because he was the first person who accepted Islam, believed in Allah, and acknowledged the Islamic prophecy; as well as, the agreement of brotherhood which was done among the migrants in Makkah and among migrants and Ansars in Al-Madinah (between himself and ‘Ali (as), made ‘Ali (as) his religious brother. On the other hand, ‘Ali (as) was the cousin of the Prophet (sawas) and undoubtedly, he was the closest relative of the Prophet (sawas) who held great respect in the eye of the Prophet (sawas).

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1. **Al-imamah wa siyasah** 1:22-28, **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:455-458, **al-Kamil fi’l-Tarikh** 2:326-33, Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 6:5-11.
2. **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:443 year 11/H. events.
3. Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 6:8.
4. Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 1:219.

An Analysis of the Meeting in Saqifah

Ansars rushed into Saqifah Bani Sa'ideh and held a secret meeting there. They brought the chief of Bani Khazraj – Sa'ad bin Ubadah – who was ill at that time, to the meeting. Sa'ad said to his sons that due to his illness, he would not able to speak loudly so the gathering couldhear his voice. He requested that his sons repeat his words clearly for the people. In this way, Sa'ad spoke, his son (Qais), after having carefully listening, repeated his words loudly for the people. Sa'ad said to the people: You were the first ones to accept the Divine Religion and have so much greatness gained by none of the Arab tribes. The holy Prophet (sawas) stayed among his nation for thirteen years and called them towards Islam, but only a small number of people believed in him. And then he called you towards his religion and made you proud and gave you greatness. You quarrelled with those who were disobedient to him; and you fought the enemies of Islam more than others. And then Allah the Almighty took his soul while he was very happy with you. Unite with each other on this topic, because you are the most suitable for succession of the Prophet (sawas) than the others.[1]

But according to the people who analyzed this incident, the reason why the Ansars' gathered was not to snatch the inheritance of the Prophet (sawas), or the caliphate from its real deserving person. We are mentioning some of the reasons in the following:

1. The Elites of Ansars such as Abu Ayyub Ansari, Huthaifa binYamani, Bara' bin 'Azib, Ubadah bin Samit who all took part in the battle of Badr, were not present in the meeting.

2. The Ansar knew and remembered the words of the Prophet (sawas) regarding his succession, which according to the Prophet (sawas), all had to be from Quraysh.[2] They were also aware of

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1. Al-Jawahir, **al-Saqifah wa fadak** pp.56-57, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 6:5-6.
2. Sheikh al-Saduq, **al-Amali**, pp. 387& 388/hadith 499& 500, Sheikh al-Tusi, **al- Ghabah** pp. 128-129/h.90-93, Al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 36:230-231/hadith 11&12; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, **al-Musnad** 5:87-88 & 4:271, **al-Num'ani in al-Ghabah** p.104/hadith 31&32,, **Sahih al-Bukhari** 8:127, **Sahih Muslim** 6:3-4, **Sonan Al-Tirmidhi** 3:240/hadith2323, al-Hakim al-Nayshaburi, **Mustadrak** 3:617.

whatever had been said about the holy Household (as) of the Prophet (sawas). They witnessed how the holy Prophet (sawas) on the day of Ghadir chose ‘Ali (as) as his successor and told them to follow him and his household. When they came to know that ‘Ali (as) had not a particular role in the government, they said: "We are not going to swear our allegiance to anyone but ‘Ali (as).[1]

3. Can anyone imagine that the great persons of a nation gathered at some place to choose the successor of the Prophet (sawas) instead of gathering in his burial ceremony, knowing that his dead body had not yet been buried?

4. It can be said that the Ansar did gather to discuss their future under the shelter of the new government, because they decided to come together after they came to know that the Quraysh did not want the caliph to be from Bani Hashem. The reason for their gathering was very different from the gathering of the chiefs of Quraysh. Moreover, the Ansar had experienced fear after Makkah was liberated. They were afraid that following the liberating of Makkah, the Prophet (sawas) would not come to Al-Madinah with them again and worried that this might bring political and official isolation for them.

If the Quraysh had decided to snatch the caliphate from ‘Ali (as), the real successor of the Prophet (sawas), then the Ansar, who formed the majority of the Muslims, would have been justified in their fears of being isolated from their participating positions in the new government.

The Ansar did not gather to make the final decision, rather they came together to analyze the probable results of the Prophet’s (sawas) death and his succession, which were already somehow predictable for them. All the members of the Ansar who were present discussed their various opinions, some of them having demands that differed and opposed that of others. This is the reason why a few of them replied to Sa'ad bin Ubadah, saying: "You gave a suitable opinion and spoke very well. We will not cross the limits and do whatever you say; and we will let you have control of the government." They then changed their minds and

1. **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:443.

said: "But if the migrants do not accept it, saying that we are the friends and relatives of the Prophet (sawas) then what will we do?"[1]

Another group reacted saying: "One chief from our side and one from yours!" Sa'ad bin Ubadah, upon hearing this proposal, said: This is our first step towards defeat.

The Ansar, with this act, provided other opportunists, who wanted power, with a valuable political opportunity and a golden chance to benefit. This started with a quarrel, going against the Islamic laws and values. Thus, the profits of the tribes took precedence over prioritizing the goals and interests of the Muslim Ummah.

Omar explained his situation, when they surprised the Ansar and raided Saqifah, by saying: "By God, we saw no other issue more important than Abu Bakr's caliphate at that time. We were afraid that if once people dispersed without swearing their allegiance to Abu Bakr, the Ansar would swear their allegiance to someone else, whom we would also have to follow, acting against our will, or rise against them launching a sedition…!"[2] In this way, the political situation became more and more complex.

Caliphate in the Eyes of the Quraysh

Having seen the progress of Islamic prophecy in Makkah and among the Quraysh, the appearance of a prophet from Bani Hashem (from the most famous family of Bani Hashem) was unbearable for the Quraysh. Therefore, they became united to fight the Prophet (sawas) and Bani Hashem. For this they used their every weapon and varioustactics. Conspiracies were plotted against them and plans were made to defeat them by any means.

The acts of Quraysh were not the result of their love for worshiping idols or because they were angry with the new prophecy, because Islam had nothing against the law of nature. They wanted to guarantee their dominance by distributing the high and respectable ranks and posts among themselves; this was very

1. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 6:6.
2. **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:447, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 2: 328, Ibn Kathir, **al-Bidayah wa'l-Nihayah** 5:267, **al-Sirah al-Halabiyyah** 3:483.

relevant in those days and in Arabian Peninsula, where tribalism was prevalent everywhere.

Also, the Quraysh did not want to accept the supremacy of the Bani Hashem over other tribes. They thought that the Bani Hashem wanted supremacy over the rest of the tribes as they had the prophecy from amongst them and defended the Prophet (sawas) on every occasion. The Quraysh, therefore, surrounded the Bani Hashem in Shaib Abi Talib and made plans to kill the holy Prophet (sawas). But all their conspiracies to complete this act remained unsuccessful and the message of the Prophet (sawas) became ever stronger. So finally, the Quraysh accepted Islam, although they did not want to and consequently lost their power to stand against the Prophet (sawas) and his prophecy.

But the Prophet (sawas), by the will of God, chose ‘Ali (as) and his sons (as) for his prophecy (because they were the most learned people regarding Islamic law), as he thought them to be superior to his followers; and felt they were more suitable for the leadership of his nation. This act resulted in the jealousy of the Quraysh. Therefore, they decided to prevent the prophecy and caliphate from coming from amongst the Bani Hashem. Obviously - according to the Quraysh - the prophethood and caliphate were equal to kingship. Abu Sufyan clearly said these words, on the day Makkah was liberated, to Ibn Abbas: The kingdom of your cousin has become great.[1]

This thinking was also prominent at the time of the Prophet’s (sawas) death. Since, the Prophet (sawas) had given the news of his death, after a short time, Quraysh knew that he would not recover and would pass from the world due to this illness. On the other hand, they knew that if everything was done according to the Prophet's (sawas) will, ‘Ali (as) would undoubtedly become the caliph. The groups who had enmity with Bani Hashem, particularly ‘Ali (as), proceeded with the struggle, which resulted in the form ofthe gathering in Saqifah.

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1. **Tafsir Majma'a al-Bayan** 10:47 Holy Qur'an, Tafsir surah al-Nasser, Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 2:104, Ibn Sa‘d, **al-Tabaqat al-Kubra** 2:135, **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2: 333, **al-Kamil fi’l-Tarikh** 24:346.

Their reasoning in regards to not allowing the prophecy and caliphate to gather in Bani Hashem, can be seen in the discussion, which occurred between Omar and Ibn Abbas in the time of Omar's caliphate. Omar said to Ibn Abbas: Do you know why after the demise of the Prophet (sawas), the Quraysh did not let you be in power?

Ibn Abbas said in response: I did not want to answer him, therefore, I said: Suppose I do not know the reason of that, but I am sure the *master of the faithful,* 'Ali (as) knows it.

Omar said: The reason is because the Quraysh did not want that the prophecy and caliphate be from your tribe; and they believed that if you came into power, you would do injustice to them. Therefore, they chose the caliphate for themselves; and at last became successful in this regard.[1]

Another problem which was related to the matter of diverting caliphate from 'Ali (as), was that in many battles he had become the cause of Quraysh's defeat; and the Arabs related the blood of every person to 'Ali (as), whether he was killed by 'Ali's (as) sword, or by another's commanded by the Prophet (sawas). Because, according to the Arabs' custom, there was no other person among the partisans of the Prophet (sawas) whom they could relate the blood of their relatives to.[2]

Pushing 'Ali (as) away from Caliphate

According to the following reasons, we must conclude that there should have been a very accurate program for pushing 'Ali (as) aside of caliphate, and that it had been purposely planned well in advance, opposing the prophetic planning of 'Ali's (as) succession. The reasons are as follows:

1. When 'Ali's (as) opponents heard the news of the Prophet's (sawas) serious illness, they decided to remain in Al-Madinah and were not willing to leave the city at any cost. On the other hand, they had observed how the Prophet (sawas) had emphasized on the

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1. Al-Jawahir, **al-Saqifah wa fadak** p.131, **Tarikh al-Tabari** 3:389, **Al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** pp.63-64.
2. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 13:300

succession of ‘Ali (as) and how he continuously insisted on following him to save the religion and government from deviation.

2. They always remained with the Prophet (sawas) and never left him alone. They wanted to prevent every word of the Prophet (sawas), which was in support of ‘Ali (as), from spreading among the people. This is why Omar said in a gathering, that "the Book of Allah is enough for us";a commotion began amongst the people gathered in the same place as the Prophet (sawas). This word compelled the Prophet (sawas) to speak with a tone of voice full of pain, because he was offended. The holy Prophet (sawas) said to them: "Bring me a pen and a sheet". They disapproved of the Prophet’s (sawas) words; which was only possible, if there was something in their hearts that went against the Prophet (sawas), which compelled them do so. By making noises, they intended to prevent the Prophet (sawas) from writing his will.

3. These people made their decision about caliphate within a short time; and when they found ‘Ali (as) and the people of Bani Hashem were busy in the burial of the Prophet (sawas), they swore their allegiance to Abu Bakr. As soon as Omar was informed about the gathering of Ansars in Saqifah, he went to the house of the holy Prophet (sawas) and sent someone in to call Abu Bakr. Abu Bakr refused to come out, saying that he was busy with the burial of the Prophet (sawas). Omar, for the second time, sent the person to send another message to Abu Bakr, saying that a very important incident had occurred and his presence was very important. Hearing this, Abu Bakr came out and met Omar, but he did not inform anyone else about this, as he was afraid that ‘Ali (as) or any other person from Bani Hashem would come to know about it. What was the reason of hiding the matter, if they did not want to divert it away from ‘Ali (as)? Was the problem solely related to Abu Bakr that he alone should be aware of it, and should it be kept secret from the other Muslims and people of Bani Hashem? Were there no other more sincere individuals in Islam as compared to Abu Bakr and Omar? Why did Omar not enter into the house of the Prophet (sawas) himself to inform the people about the matter and talk to them about this?

4. They tried to keep the Ansar away, saying that they were not the Prophet’s (sawas) relatives; and in this way, they kept them from

taking part in politics.

5. At the beginning they took the allegiance of the Ansars, because if they swore their allegiance first, it would have been useless, having no value; and in this way Imam 'Ali (as) could protest against them. Also, if the Ansars swore their allegiance to Imam 'Ali (as), no one could have competed with him. Also this reality can be understood from the manner of taking allegiance from the people after they came out of Saqifah. When the people gathered in the mosque, Omar shouted at them and said: Why are you sitting in groups? Stand up and swear your allegiance to Abu Bakr, because the Ansars have already sworn their allegiance to him. After hearing this, Uthman, the Umawis, Sa'ad, Abdul Rahman and Bani Zohra accompanied by Omar, went to Abu Bakr and swore their allegiance to him.

6. A group came from the outskirts of the city in support of the opposing party of Bani Hashem. Omar said: "As soon as I saw the tribe of Aslam, I became sure of our success." And this is another clear sign.[1]

7. They tried to hide their actions, which they had carried out through their conspiracy; and whosoever, disagreed with them, they tried to propagate against, accusing them of being troublemakers among the Muslims. After some time, the people realized that they tried to push everyone away who did not swear their allegiance to him or disagreed with what they had done in Saqifah.[2]

8. Evidence proving that there was a prepared program, was that when Uthman bin Affan wrote the will of Abu Bakr, he mentioned Omar as his successor, although Abu Bakr said nothing regarding this matter; and was unconscious. How then did Uthman bin Affan come to know that Omar was the next caliph?

9. Prior to his death, Omar had appointed a group of Muslims (*shura al-khilafah*). One of them had to be chosen as the next caliph. He prepared the grounds for Uthman so well, that there was no doubt in the selection of him as the next caliph. This was a

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1. **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:459.
2. Ibn Sa'd, **al-Tabaqat al-Kubra** 3:200, **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:618, **Al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 2:425, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 1:165.

predictable outcome for every person aware of the history and the six candidates. Imam ‘Ali (as) also analyzed this matter.[1]

10. After the gathering of Saqifah, Abu Bakr occupied the seat of caliphate, Abu Ubaideh became the minister of wealth and Omar was made chief justice.[2]

The mentioned posts are the most important ones in a government. Such a management and the ruling of the mentioned people were not accidental; and this was impossible without planning.

11. During the last few minutes of his life, Omar said: If Abu Ubaideh was alive, I would choose him as the next caliph.[3] Was Abu Ubaideh so intelligent and did his abilities compel Omar to say these words? Never; because, Omar saw the ability of caliphate for ‘Ali (as), but he did not want to be held accountable for appointing ‘Ali (as) to be the caliph in his lifetime, nor after his death.

12. Mu'awiyah accused Omar and Abu Bakr for snatching the caliphate from ‘Ali (as) which was rightfully his. He said: ‘They had pre planned this’. In one of his letters to Muhammad Ibn Abu Bakr, he clearly said: ‘I and your father were completely aware of the abilities of the son of Abu Talib, ‘Ali (as); and his right was crystal clear for us, as the caliphate was rightfully his. When the holy Prophet (sawas) passed away from the world, your father and Farooq (Omar) were the first ones who snatched his right and disobeyed his orders. For this, they cooperated with each other and then called him to swear his allegiance to them. ‘Ali (as) did not swear his allegiance to them for some time, and they both threatened and decided to kill him.[4]

13. ‘Ali (as) said to Omar: Squeeze the milk of the cow of caliphate today so that half of it is given to you, and prepare the

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1. **Ansab al-Ashraf** 5:19.
2. **Al-Kamil fi’l-Tarikh** 2:420.
3. **Tarikh al-Tabari** 3:292, **Al-Kamil fi’l-Tarikh** 3:65, Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 1:190.
4. **Waq'at suffin ibn muzahim** pp.119-120, Sheikh al-mufid **Ikhtisas** p.126, Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 33:579/hadith 724, **Ansab al-Ashraf for Bilathari** p.397, Al-Masoudi, **Murooj al-Dahab** 3:199, Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 3:189-190.

ground for his ground –Abu Bakr's caliphate– so that he may inherit it back from him tomorrow.[1]

14. Hazrat Zahra (as) accused those in power for political grouping saying that they had come united to deprive Bani Hashem of caliphate, while plotting conspiracies, saying:

"You used the caliphate for your purposes and tried to come into power, although it was not your right, but you snatched it by creating disturbances.

﴿أَلَا فِي ٱلْفِتْنَةِ سَقَطُواْ وَإِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ لَمُحِيطَةُۢ بِٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ﴾

"Look! They have already fallen into temptation and indeed hell besieges the faithless."[2][3]

The Negative Consequences of Saqifah

1. Intractable Decision: The participators in Saqifah neglected the words of the holy Prophet (sawas) about his Household (as) and did not give importance to his words in regards to holding firmly to their guidelines. Suppose, the Prophet (sawas) did not say anything about the caliphate of anyone from his Household (as) and suppose this family from many aspects such as relations to the Prophet (sawas), ethics, Jihad, knowledge, practice, faith and sincerity did not have any value, but was like other companions of the Prophet (sawas), still the question would arise as to why the people of Saqifah did not wait till the end of the Prophet's (sawas) burial ceremony and then choose the caliph?! Of course, their act was not to fill the gap, which occurred upon the death of the Prophet (sawas). It was only to neglect the grounds which were made by the holy Prophet (sawas) about the prophecy of his holy Household (as). After doing so, they tried to take the control of the

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1. Al-'Amali, **al-Sirat al-Mustaqim** 2:225. Al-Shirazi **Kitab al-Arba'ain** p.153, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 6:11, **Al-Imamah wa Siyasah** p.29, **Al-jawahiri al-Saqifah wa fadak** p.62.
2. *Surat Al-Tawbah, 9: 49.*
3. **Sharah al-Akhabar** 3:35, hadith 974, **Ibn Tawus al- Tarafe**: 265, Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 29 p. 225, 237& 273, Al-Jawahiri, **Al-Saqifah wa fadak** p.143, Ibn Tayfur, **Balaghat al-Nisa** p.14, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 16:251.

government within no time. They did not want that everything should go according to what the Prophet (sawas) had said. That is why Omar said what he did about Abu Bakr's allegiance: that this allegiance by Abu Bakr was an imprudent act; God protected the people from his evil. Be aware that if anyone swear such allegiance, kill him.

2. This allegiance did not take place between those who knew of the basic conditions for such occasions, because they did not accept the suggestion of the very famous companions of the Prophet (sawas) such as ‘Ali (as), Abbas, Ammar Yasser, Salman, Khuzaimeh bin Sabit, Abuthar, Abu Ayub Ansari, Zubair bin Awam, Talha, Ubai bin Ka'b and so many others.

2. They were oppressed in taking the allegiance from Muslims. Most of the Muslims were compelled to swear their allegiance to Abu Bakr as Omar usedhis whip so many times to force the allegiance.

2. Deviational Meanings of Saqifah: This historical event conveyed many negative perceptions:

A. They wanted the superiority among the nation of Muhammad (sawas) who had said: "Who wants to fight us in the government (kingdom) of Muhammad (sawas)?! This was, of course was very offensive to the Muslims.

B. They changed the meaning of divine prophecy and the succession of the Prophet (sawas) into government of a family who gained their power through the tribal people, not through the Islamic regulations.

C. They provided the people with a chance of standing against the selected successor, whom the caliphate was considered solely his, gaining them the power as well as the opportunity to fight such a person whose obedience was made compulsory for people by the Almighty Allah (swt). In addition they made people think to rebel against the infallible ruler who was given this post by Allah the Almighty. Some of them said (about succession of the Prophet -sawas-): There should be a king from us and another one from your side.

D. The participation of Saqifah provided good grounds to neglect the (Ummah) nation of Muhammad (sawas) and its opinion. The same thing was repeated in the time of Omar's caliphate. This again happened for the third time at Omar's death in the council for which he ordered.

Imam 'Ali's (as) position from Saqifah:

Imam 'Ali (as) had no greed to be the caliph. He only tried to strengthen the basis of the Islamic pillars and wanted to enhance its boundaries. He wanted the religion of Islam and the Muslims to be eminent. Therefore, he explained the greatness of the Prophet's (sawas) conduct and his attitude, thus calling the people towards Islam and encouraging them to walk on the path of Muhammad (sawas).

Imam 'Ali (as) was busy in the burial ceremony of the Prophet (sawas) and he could not even imagine that the caliphate would be snatched from him, because he was the most suitable person for this post according to Allah and His Prophet (sawas).

But the people felt differently to what the holy Prophet (sawas) said on the days of Uhud and Hunain. Their greed compelled them to deviate from the reality and come into power by other means. They had left the Prophet (sawas) alone during the dangerous times of his life. They did the same during his burial and went to gain the power.

The news of gathering of Saqifah had reached the house of the Prophet (sawas) where 'Ali (as), the people of Bani Hashim and the Prophet's (sawas) sincere companions were busy with his burial. Hearing this, Abbas the uncle of the Prophet (sawas) said to 'Ali (as): Nephew! Lean your hand so that I swear my allegiance to you. If I do it then the people will say: The Prophet's (sawas) uncle has sworn his allegiance to his cousin and thus even two persons will not disagree with you on the issue of caliphate.

Imam 'Ali (as) replied: "O dear uncle! Is there anyone else who thinks himself suitable more than me?!"

Abbas said: You will come to know.

Certainly, Imam ‘Ali (as) was fully aware of the conspiracies of his time. Therefore, he clearly said to his uncle: I do not want anyone to swear his allegiance to me in secret.[1]

The Positioning of Abu Sufyan

It has been narrated that Abu Sufyan came to the house of the Prophet (sawas) where ‘Ali (as) and Abbas were still present and said to him: Why should the caliphate be in the smallest tribe of Quraysh?! By God! I can fill the city with the men – afoot and horsemen against him (Abu Bakr). ‘Ali (as) replied: "O Abu Sufyan, you have fought against Islam for a long time, but never have been successful to do any harm to it."

Also it is narrated that after the people had sworn their allegiance to Abu Bakr, Abu Sufyan reached and said: By God! I am seeing two great riots, which can only be removed only by bloodshed. O family of Abdi Manaf! What is Abu Bakr doing among you? Where are ‘Ali (as) and Abbas who have been weakened?! Then he looked at ‘Ali (as) and said: "Lean your hand so that I swear my allegiance to you. ‘Ali (as) did not accept his request and reproved him. Imam ‘Ali (as) said: "By doing this you want nothing but hustle and bustle and you have been the enemy of Islam from a long time. We do not need your suggestions." When the people swore their allegiance to Abu Bakr, Abu Sufyan said: What is our concern with Abu Fasil? The family of Abdi Manaf should govern the people![2]

He was told: Abu Bakr has given a post to your son. He said: He has shown his kinship.

The reason behind AbuSufyan 's opposition to the gathering of Saqifah was not to accept that ‘Ali (as) and Bani Hashim were right, it was a political movement by which he wanted to show cunningness against Islam and oppress it, otherwise, relations between AbuSufyanand Abu Bakr's was very strong and cordial.

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1. Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 9:196.
2. **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2: 449, Ibn al-Athir, **Al-Kamil fi’l- Tarikh** 2: 326.

The Adversaries of Saqifah

The consequences of Saqifah and seeing that the elected ones did not have the governing ability or guardianship of the Muslims, the rising of some groups against them was inevitable. Among the adversaries, three groups can be mentioned in particular:

The first group being the Ansars: They had a very strong social position, because they formed a great number of Muslims; and could be relied upon during elections. This group quarrelled with the caliph and his two companions in Saqifah Bani Sa'adeh, and a conflict arose between them, ending in the benefit of the Quraysh.

In this way, Abu Bakr and his partisans took the advantage against the Ansars as manifested in two factors, which are as follows:

•The Arabs believed in religious heredity and Abu Bakr mentioned the same thing among them saying that the Quraysh were the relatives of the Prophet (sawas) and were near to him more than any other Muslim, and thus they were the most suitable persons for government and succession of the Prophet (sawas).

•Ansars divided into two groups. One group favoured Abu Bakr's caliphate. The other group opposed him. As a result, a tribal inclination came into being, since some Ansars felt jealous of others. Also, they wanted to become nearer and nearer to the new government to gain power and achieve a suitable governmental post and rank. This became clear from the wordings of Usaeeidbin Hudhair in the Saqifah, when he said: If only for once, Bani Khazraj comes into power, they will dominate you forever. Therefore, stand up and swear allegiance to Abu Bakr.[1]

Two things in the gathering of Saqifah supplied more support for Abu Bakr strengthening him in becoming the caliph:

•Weakening Imam 'Ali's (as) position, because the Ansars, by swearing their allegiance to Abu Bakr, chose an option that did not allow them to go towards 'Ali (as) and accept him as the caliph.

•Abu Bakr was the only defender of the rights of the migrants especially the rights of Quraysh in Saqifah. Everything necessary

1. **Dinorri al-Imamah wa siyasah** 1:26.

for it was available there.The migrants, whose presence could completely change the story, were not present in the gathering of Saqifah.

The Second: The Umawi party. Abu Sufyan, especially, wanted a good post in the new government and was greedy for the great political share so that he could re-gain the greatness of his past – in the time of ignorance. On the other hand, Abu Bakr and his friends knew Abu Sufyan and the Umawi party very well. They were completely aware of their political and material inclinations. They therefore cooperated with them. It was not too important for Abu Bakr to change some of the basic Islamic rules in this regard. This is why Abu Bakr gave all the property to Abu Sufyan, which was collected by Abu Sufyanfrom the Muslims as Zakat in obedience to the Prophet's (sawas) command. And victorious people of Saqifah paid little attention to what the Umawis said, neither showing any kind of attention to Abu Sufyan's threats and words in favour of Bani Hashim. But Abu Bakr and his partisans tried their best to make the role of Bani Hashim colourless both in the present and future. For this, they gave the Umawis very important governmental posts in different parts of the government.

The third: The Hashemis: There was a big group who were in favor of Bani Hashim. The famous members of this group were Ammar, Salman, Abuthar, Miqdad (may their souls rest in peace) and so many others. They admitted that caliphate is the right of Bani Hashim. They knew of what the holy Prophet (sawas) had said on the day of Ghadir and had a strong belief in those words of the holy Prophet (sawas). According to them the people of Bani Hashim were the only heirs of the Prophet (sawas). The void reasoning of Saqifah did not affect them, because, when they saw the movements of the people of Saqifah, theycame to know that they wanted to fulfil their desires and take control and make it their own right. This was nothing but a warning that the Islamic government had deviated.

The Outcome of Saqifah

Abu Bakr and his men were victorious against Ansars and Umawis and got the control of the Muslims as their caliph, but this victory brought some political contradictions, too, because in Saqifah, his

only point was the kinship of the Prophet (sawas). And this made him successful, helping him come to power and get the religious government of the Muslims claiming to be the heirs of the Prophet (sawas).

But Bani Hashim changed the situation for the people of Saqifah. They refused Abu Bakr with the same reasoning, which he had used in Saqifah to take the control of the Muslims and come into power. Bani Hashim said to him: If the Quraysh want to claim to be the Prophet's (sawas) kin to come into power, (then you must know that) Bani Hashim is more suitable for the post of caliphate.

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

"If the migrants want to snatch the succession saying that they are the relatives of the Prophet (sawas), then we have the right to oppose them. If our reasoning was better than theirs, then we would be the only ones to claim to be the relatives of the Prophet (sawas), otherwise, the Ansars would remain on their claim."

Abbas in a discussion with Abu Bakr clearly mentioned this topic. He said: O Abu Bakr, you claim that we are the family tree of the Prophet (sawas). But you should know that you are the neighbours of that tree and we are who form its branches.[1]

Imam 'Ali (as) was like a fear in the hearts of those who were successful in Saqifah. They saw Imam 'Ali (as) as being a big hurdle, getting in the way of their inclinations and ambitions. 'Ali (as) could benefit from those opportunists who were also large in number and who changed their minds with condition, while filling their stomachs with khums of grains of the fields of Al-Madinah and Fadak; but he did not do this, keeping in mind his great status among the people. His great personality did not allow him to commit such acts. On the other hand, he could also use his relation to the Prophet (sawas) against the leading persons in Saqifah. He mentioned this in saying: "The base for their reasoning was a tree whose fruits were destroyed by them."[2]

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1. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 6:5.
2. Ibid 1:116 sermon 67, al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 29:611/hadith 26, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 6: 4.

That is why most of the people respected the holy Household (as). If he had revolted against those who were in charge, he could have created political crises and great turmoil against the ruling party, who could hardly be able to quell it. However Imam ‘Ali (as) had chosen not to do so. Therefore people respected ‘Ali (as) and his Household (as) because he gave the benefits of Islam priority over personal benefits. The ruling party in order to avoid any negative consequences of Imam ‘Ali’s (as) future actions, had to deal with and follow one of the following two options:

•To deny any connection between the caliphate and being close to the Prophet’s (sawas) tribe, which was one of the main irrefutable arguments, as ‘Ali (as) was a close relative of the Prophet (sawas). If they did so, then Abu Bakr’s caliphate and succession to the Prophet (sawas) would not be legal.

•A contradiction could be created in the sayings of the ruling party who had insisted to be the relatives of the Prophet (sawas) in front of all the parties; but they did not give any posts to the Bani Hashim, who were the real relatives of the Prophet (sawas), in their government. And if they gave any of the posts to them, even then they were not in a position to face their resistance. Therefore, the ruling party chose the second option.[1]

1. **Al-Shahid al-Sadr, Fadak fi al-Tarikh** pp. 84-96.

CHAPTER TWO
IMAM 'ALI (AS) DURING THE REIGN OF ABU BAKR

Government Facing the Opposition

The people who came into power, who had struggled and planned for it, did not neglect it at any cost. They insisted on what they had said in Saqifah. Instead of investigating whether or not such a thing was legal, they used every means to defend it and kept insisting upon it. Therefore, we see that this group used every possible means to keep the holy Household (as) away from politics and government; and by force, gave an end to any thinking, which was in the favour of Bani Hashim. As well as this, they tried to remove every possible opposition. We have outlined some of their attempts in the following lines:

•The new ruling party manipulated in portraying to its opponents that any form of opposing the new caliph could result in riot and disturbance; and such a thing is forbidden in Islam. However, the Islamic conditions also helped them to accuse their opponents. In addition to heterodoxy (the ridah), which came into being within the boundaries of Islamic World after the demise of the Prophet (sawas), the external enemies of Islam also began threatening the Muslims.

•The use of forceful methods against Imam 'Ali (as) and his followers, by the caliph and his partisans, which they had already used against Sa'ad bin Ubadah in Saqifah. Their threats were so severe that Omar ordered to burn down the house of Imam 'Ali (as), although Hazrat Zahra' (as) was in the house[1]. This meant that the new government did not respect Hazrat Zahra' (as) or any other person from the Prophet's (sawas) household. There was also the possibility of them using the same method against the rest of

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1. **Kittab Saleem bin Qias** pp.149-150. Al-khasibi, **al-Hidaiah al-Kubra** pp.177-178, **al-Mustarshad** pp.376-378 h.125, al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 43:197 h.39.

the family members.

•Abu Bakr and his partisans feared that if they gave any position to the Bani Hashim, they might also have a share in caliphate[1]. Therefore, they did not give them any of the positions; not even giving a single person any of the posts in the vast Islamic World.

•The enemies of the Bani Hashim formed big political parties to show their enmity against the Household of the Prophet (sawas) as well as to reach the caliphate or to gain high governmental posts. In this way, we come to know that Umawis had great political successes in the time of Abu Bakr, themselves and Omar had high governmental ranks and posts. In addition to this, Uthman bin Affan had a better chance, compared to his opponents in the council, which was formed by the second caliph.

A special feature of this big political party was its enhancement and continuity. In fact, this political party did not belong to a person or two but it belonged to a huge family. As a result, the conditions for the Household of the Prophet (sawas) were never favourable, in order for them to take the control of caliphate; or in the very least, it was quite hard for them to do so.

•They removed all those people from their posts who were in favour of Bani Hashim. It has been narrated that Abu Bakr removed Khalid bin Sa'eed bin Aas from his post of commandership, although, he himself had chosen him for this role, and sent him to conquer Damascus. He did this because Omar gave him a report in which he informed Abu Bakr of an inclination of Khalid towards the Household of the Prophet (sawas). Also, he reminded Abu Bakr of the positioning of Khalid, after the demise of the Prophet (sawas) against them and in favour of the Household (as).[2]

•They weakened Imam ‘Ali (as) economically. The reasoning behind this was because they were afraid that Imam ‘Ali (as) would use his economical power to snatch his right of caliphate from them. Therefore, the caliph confiscated Fadak which

1. **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:617, Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi’l-Tarikh** 2: 42.
2. Ibid 2:586, al-Hakim al-Nayshaburi, **al-Mustadrak ʿala al-Sahihayn** 3: 249-250.

belonged to Hazrat Zahra' (as), because they knew that if Imam 'Ali (as) called the people to swear their allegiance to him, it would be a perfect economic support for his cause. This was a possibility if we accept that all the political parties had sold their views to the government and they would turn back to Imam 'Ali (as) if there were more benefits for them in this transaction. In this case, they could terminate their agreement with the government. Nevertheless, Abu Bakr was using wealth to keep the people in darkness, while making the political parties to support him.[1]

In addition to this if we say that the personality of Hazrat Zahra' (as) itself was a good reason for the followers of 'Ali (as) to believe that Imam 'Ali (as) was the most suitable person for the post of caliphate and succession of the Prophet (sawas), then we come to know that the Abu Bakr successfully showed the personality of Hazrat Zahra' (as) useless in support of Imam ' Ali (as). He did this very tactfully, telling the Muslims that Fatima (as) being a woman, was like all other women, meaning that her opinion was important in very small matters such as Fadak and bigger issues relating to caliphate; as if Zahra' (as) had asked for fields – which were not hers – then it would also be possible that she might demand all Islamic wealth for her husband 'Ali (as). While according to the companions of the Prophet (sawas), when the successor of the Prophet (sawas) came into power, he gave no right to 'Ali (as) in the government.

It has been narrated that when Abu Bakr's caliphate started, he sent someone to the correspondent of Hazrat Zahra' (as) and sent him out of Fadak. Then he himself invaded Fadak. He narrated a Hadith from the Prophet (sawas) which was heard by no other person except him. He said: "I have heard the Prophet (sawas) saying: "We the Prophets do not leave behind anything as inheritance, but

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1. Al-Nu'amani **sharah al-Akhbar** 3: 23 h. 973&. p. 34 h. 974, al-Tabari **Dalal al-Imamah** p. 109, al-Tabarsi **Al-Ihtijaj** 1; 119. Ibn Tawus, **al-Tara'if** p. 247, **al-Amili al-sirat al-Mustaqim** 2: 282, **al-jawahiri al-saqifah wa fadakp**.99. **Musnad Ahmad** 1:4, **Sahih al-Bukhari** 5: 25, **Sahih Muslim** 5: 155, **Al-Tabaqat al-Kubra** 2: 314, **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2: 448, Ibn Kathir **al-Bidaiah wa al-Nihayah** 5:306.

whatever remains after us is alms and charity." According to this Hadith, the Prophet (sawas) left nothing as inheritance but whatever remained after him was the right of the poor and needy people!

Criticism on the Calipha of Saqifah

The companions of the Prophet (sawas), who strongly supported Imam ‘Ali (as), asked for his right in the caliphate, using clear legal evidence while openly criticizing the government.

This group gathered in the Prophet’s (sawas) mosque, and then Khuzaima bin Sabit-a companion of the Prophet (sawas) stood and said: O people! Do you not remember that the Prophet (sawas) accepted my testimony and did not ask for another person? They said: Whatever you are saying is correct. He said: Then I witness that I heard from the Prophet (sawas) that he said: My Household (as) can separate the right from wrong, they are the leaders who the people must follow." I have spoken what I knew and there is no more responsibility for me. Now you can decide what to do.

Ammar bin Yasir also started criticizing and objecting. He said: O people of Quraysh and O Muslims! It is very good if you already know, if not then you must know that the Household of your Prophet (sawas) is more suitable for his inheritance as compared to others. They have more knowledge of the religious laws than anyone else; also they are more sincere to the nation of the Prophet (sawas) than anybody else. Therefore, follow your leader and return his right to him before you go astray and become weak; and before there comes a dispersion among you.

Then Sahl bin Hanaif stood up and said: O people of Quraysh! I witness that I saw the holy Prophet (sawas) in the mosque having ‘Ali’s (as) hand in his hand and saying:

"O people! This man ‘Ali (as) is your leader after me. He is my administrator both in my life and after my death. He will pay my debts and fulfil my promises. He is the very first person who will meet me near the Pond. How prosperous is he who follows him and woe is to the one who refuses him and leaves him alone."

Then Abu Haisam bin Teihan stood up and started saying: I witness that when, in Ghadir, the holy Prophet (sawas) introduced 'Ali (as) to the people, Ansars said: the Prophet (sawas) has introduced 'Ali (as) as his successor. Some others said: The Prophet (sawas) introduced him so that he can also become the leader and guardian of the people like the Prophet (sawas) himself. This discussion went on. At last we sent someone towards the Prophet (sawas) and asked him the secret behind his words. The Prophet (sawas) said:

He, 'Ali (as), is my administrator and the leader of the believers after me; and he is the most benevolent person to my nation."

I am witnessing what I remember, everyone who wants to believe it, believe it; otherwise disbelieve in the matter. The Day of Judgment is in the waiting!

And then the next group including Abuthar, Abu Ayyub Ansari, Ataba bin Abi Lahab, Noman bin Ajlan and Salman Farsi stood and delivered their reasoning against the partisans of Saqifah.[1]

Compulsory Allegiance

Imam 'Ali (as) restrained from swearing his allegiance and his followers stood up and criticized the government and asked the ruling party to hand over the caliphate to 'Ali (as) who was the rightful person for this post. This action was a great challenge and danger for the ruling government, because 'Ali (as) had a very effective role among his followers and he could play a vital role in revolting the feeling of the Muslims and uniting them in his own favour. On the other hand, some faithful tribes such as Asad and Fazara and Bani Hanifa [2]– who lived in the suburbs of Al-Madinah – and some other tribes who had refused the government of Abu Bakr became a real danger for the government of Abu Bakr. These tribes offered prayers and fulfilled all Islamic duties, but did not pay their Zakat to the new government as they thought it illegal and unlawful. They were the tribes who on the day of Ghadir had

1. **Khisal, al-Saduq**, pp. 461-465, **Al-Ihtijaj** 1:89-106, al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 28: 189-202 h. 2, **Tarikh abi al-Fidaa** 1: 156.
2. **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2: 476.

witnessed that the holy Prophet (sawas) asked the people to swear their allegiance to ‘Ali (as) as the successor of the Prophet (sawas) after him. Therefore, the ruling party decided to give an end to all these. For this, he compelled the real leader of the Muslims ‘Ali (as) to swear his allegiance to Abu Bakr.

According to some historians, Omar met Abu Bakr and said to him: Do you not want ‘Ali (as) to swear his allegiance to you, because he has not done it, yet. While ‘Ali (as) does not swear his allegiance to you, you cannot do anything! Send someone to him and ask him for allegiance.[1]

At last Abu Bakr and his partisans decided to compel ‘Ali (as) for allegiance. Therefore, they, along with a force, went to the house of Hazrat Zahra' (as) and went in her house forcefully, dragging him to Abu Bakr in the most unfair manner. They did this to ‘Ali (as) the person about whom the Prophet (sawas) had said: "You are to me like Haroon was to Musa, with a difference that there will come no Prophet after me." When they took ‘Ali (as) in front of Abu Bakr, they shouted at him: "Swear your allegiance to Abu Bakr now!" Imam ‘Ali (as) replied to them with great courage and confidence saying:

"I am more suitable for caliphate than you and I will not swear my allegiance to you; it is better for you to swear your allegiance to me. You snatched the caliphate from the Ansars saying that you are the relatives of the Prophet (sawas) and now you are snatching it from us, too! Did you not claim in front of the Ansars that as the Prophet (sawas) was from amongst you, you were more suitable for his succession? They also gave control of government to you and let you be the caliph! Now I have come with the same reasoning which you expressed for the Ansars. We were the more deserving people during the Prophet's (sawas) life, as well as after his demise. If you have faith in Allah, deal with us fairly. Otherwise, you have consciously oppressed us.[2]

After saying this Imam ‘Ali (as) clearly mentioned the reality of his caliphate for everyone. Now they were facing the same

1. **Al-imamah wa siyasah** p.30, **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:443.
2. **Al-imamah wa siyasah** p.28-29.

reasoning which they had used to come into power. They had two options left: whether to surrender themselves in front of 'Ali (as) and accept him as the caliph; or reply to him in a different way, thoughts they carried in their hearts and minds. When Omar bin Khitab heard Imam 'Ali's (as) reply, he said to him forcefully: "I will not leave you unless you swear allegiance." Imam 'Ali (as) reproached him and said: Squeeze the milk of the cow of caliphate today so that half of it is given to you, and stabilize the bases of his – Abu Bakr's caliphate – so that tomorrow he may give it back to you. O Omar! By God, I will not accept your words and will not swear my allegiance to Abu Bakr.[1]

Here Imam 'Ali (as) uncovered the secret of why Omar was backing Abu Bakr so much. In fact, he wanted the caliphate to be his after Abu Bakr.

Abu Bakr was afraid that this story might come to end against him. He was afraid that Imam 'Ali (as) might become angry at any moment. Therefore, he said: "If you are not willing to swear your allegiance to me, I will not compel you for it." He then asked Abu Ubaidehbin Jarrah to talk to him, to make Imam 'Ali (as) calm and affable, AbuUbaideh said to Imam (as):

"O my cousin! You are young and these old people are known as your family. They are more aware of the problems than you are. I see Abu Bakr stronger than you in governmental problems. He can bear this responsibility in a better manner and knows the things well. Therefore, hand over the caliphate to Abu Bakr. If God gives you long life, you are also suitable for caliphate because of your excellence, religiosity, understanding, previous records and your relationship to the Prophet (sawas)."

This was for nothing more than to keep the people in darkness. Imam 'Ali (as) was well aware of these problems, but these things made him sad and anxious about the future of the Muslims. Imam 'Ali (as) was compelled to address the people and make them aware of what was going on around them:

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1. Ibid, p.29, Al-Jawahir, **al-Saqifah wa fadak** p.63, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 6:11.

"O group of migrants! Do not forget Allah! Do not take the caliphate and directorship of Muhammad (sawas) out of his house and do not transfer it into your houses. Do not make his Household deprived of their rights. O migrants! By God! We are more deserving than anyone else because we are the Household of the Prophet (sawas); and we deserve the caliphate more than anybody else until there exists one reader of the Holy Book, or one person who is aware of the rules of Divine religion – Islam; the tradition of the holy Prophet (sawas) and other problems related to the people who solve their problems and do justice to them. And I swear by God that there does exist such people. Do not follow your desires because it makes you deviate from the path of Allah and that will create a distance between you and the truth.[1]

It has been narrated that Hazrat Zahra' was afraid that the government would harm Imam ‘Ali (as), therefore, she took the hands of Imam Hassan (as) and Imam Hussain (as) and went to defend her husband. She was being accompanied by all women of Bani Hashim. She reached the mosque and said that if they do not release Imam (as), she would curse them, saying:

"Leave my cousin and husband, otherwise, I will reveal my hair and will put the clothes of my father on my head and then curse you people. The she-camel of the prophet Saleh (as) was not dearer than me to God, neither was her son dearer than my sons."[2]

Imam ‘Ali (as) and the Complexities of Saqifah

Among the excellent standpoints of Imam ‘Ali (as) was his decision related to caliphate after the Prophet (sawas). This is known as the most surprising one because Divine law asks for a champion in every period that can devote his wealth and life for Divine laws and strengthen the school of laws of his time. This is what sent ‘Ali (as) to his death bed on "Lailatul Mubeet" and became the reason for relief for the Prophet (sawas) on the day of migration.

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1. **Al-imamah wa siyasah** p.29. Al-Jawahir, **al-Saqifah wa fadak** p.63, Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 6:12.
2. **Al-Mustarshid** pp.381-382, h. 128, Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, S**harh Nahj al-Balaghah** 28:206 h.5.

After the Prophet's (sawas) death, 'Ali (as) faced lots of difficulties and sufferings, but he did not have the opportunity of sacrifice like his sons Hassan and Hussin (as). Because, If Imam 'Ali (as) would sacrifice himself for bringing the required changes in the caliphate, then there would be no one after him to make the things right. The grandsons of the Prophet (sawas) – Imam Hassan and Imam Hussain (as) – were not able to do this at that time.

'Ali (as) during his whole life – from his birth in Ka'bah till his martyrdom in mosque of Kufah – was always ready to be sacrificed for his aims and slogans. He actually sacrificed his post which the Prophet (sawas) had given him. He for greater purposes, being the guardianship of the people after him, denied taking control of political power. In fact, Imam 'Ali (as) was on a junction, in which every side had its own difficulties and problems:

He could swear his allegiance to Abu Bakr like the rest of the Muslims. In this way he could guarantee his safety, personal benefits and future interests; as well as having a governmental post and respect in the eyes of the official people. Certainly such a thing was impossible for someone like 'Ali (as), because allegiance to Abu Bakr was equal to adversity with the laws of the Prophet (sawas), and would make the Divine leadership and guardianship go astray from the right path forever. In this case all of the struggles of the Prophet (sawas) and 'Ali (as), for strengthening the fundamentals of Islam would be nullified and useless. As a result the Islamic system would deviate from the right path.

Or Imam 'Ali (as) could rise against the caliphate of Abu Bakr's militarily. In this case he would have to call people towards himself.

Or he had the option to keep quiet and choose the passive option and slower path to save the Islamic system and Muslims from deviation.

But what would be the result of such a movement? Here we will try to understand what could be the result of military action against the government under those conditions:

Usually the rulers and kings do not leave their position while facing a minor challenge from people's side. What we know about

the caliphs is that they were very serious about the caliphate, which means that they would do everything to defend their position and government. In such conditions, can a person imagine that one such as Sa'ad bin Ibadah would collect force and rise against the government, benefiting from the situation to reach his political desires? We know very well that when he was asked to swear his allegiance to Abu Bakr, he threatened the winning party by a revolution. He said: "I swear by God! I will fight you till the very last arrow in quiver and will thrust my spear into your bodies. I will raise my sword against you and will always fight your family and partisans. If all the jinnis and the humans come to defend you, I will not swear my allegiance to you!"[1]

He threatened to bring revolution but could not dare to do so. He feared to be the first person rising against the caliphate which could bring very severe consequences for him. Therefore, he was satisfied with threatening at that time and waited for disturbance to allow him to do what he wanted with the help of others. However, it was possible that Sa'd's revolution be practical and his fear be removed. The government seemed very weak to him because he heard a very loud noise in his favour, which was a clear sign of a new revolution. He thought to discharge the migrants from Al-Madinah and take the control of the Muslims in his hands[2]. Hubab bin Munzan in the gathering of Saqifah clearly mentioned this issue.

Certainly, after this event, the political formations of Umawis should not be forgotten, and that of which they did to reach the powerful positions and the influence they had in the last years of ignorance in Makkah. In those days, the control of the city was in Abu Sufyan's hands and this stood against Islam and government of the Prophet (sawas). However, now the same rank was given to Itab bin Usaeeid bin Umayah.

When we study the conditions of that time,[3] we come to know that when the Prophet (sawas) passed away from the world and the

1. **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2: 459.
2. Ibid 2:459.
3. **Al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 3:123

news of his death reached Makkah, Itab bin Usaid bin Abul Aas bin Umayyah, who was made the governor of the city by the holy Prophet (sawas), hid somewhere. The condition of the city became unsteady and its people turned apostate. Although their reason in abandoning their religion was not satisfactory, and according to some research, their converting was not that they would think their victory was in Abu Bakr's victory, because Abu Bakr was settled as caliph on the very first day of the Prophet's (sawas) death. Probably, the news of Abu Bakr's caliphate reached the people of Makkah along with the news of the Prophet's (sawas) death. The reason for Itab bin Usaid hiding, was that he wanted to take his political position. Therefore, he hid and disturbed the conditions and waiting till the anger of Abu Sufyan was removed and when he agreed with the conditions and after he reached to a point with the rulers[1], then he would reappear and return everything to its position.

Therefore, there was a good relation between the Umawi personalities in those days. This showed a power which could easily be felt in the wordings of Abu Sufyan, because when he became angry with Abu Bakr and his partisans, he said: "I am observing a revolt which could not be removed except through bloodshed." Also he said in regards of 'Ali (as) and his uncle Abbas: "I swear by God in whose hand is my life, I would only support these two persons (i.e. 'Ali (as) and Abbas)."[2]

The Umawis were completely ready for uprising and revolution. When they asked 'Ali (as) to accept the leadership of those against the government, 'Ali (as) was fully aware of what they wanted from him in reality. He knew that their backing could not be relied upon. Imam 'Ali (as) also knew that they actually wanted to achieve their goals by using him. Therefore, 'Ali (as) did not accept their request. Seeing the enmity among different groups, it was predictable that they could rise up anytime. The power of the new rulers was also doubted. The reason behind their dispersion was due to the deviation from their religion and separation of Makkah from Al-Madinah.

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1. **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2:449.
2. Ibid 2:449.

Therefore, in such a sensitive time, the Alawi movement meant nothing but a number of bloody battles. And there would be a series of such battles afterwards, and itwould certainly provide the hypocrites and revolutionaries with a good opportunity.

These conditions did not allow ‘Ali (as) to revolt against the ruling party, because he knew that it may lead the Islamic system towards devastation and decline at a time in which things were very sensitive. All the Muslims had to come together and be united to stop conspiracies from occurring; and this was a time when the Muslims had to unite to choose a good leader for themselves.[1]

Therefore, Imam ‘Ali (as) had to choose a way in between which could help him perform most of the Divine rules of which he was ordered.

From this point we come to know that the holy Prophet (sawas) had two methods – or a method with two stages – in mind for Imam ‘Ali (as). One of which was to introduce him as his official and legal successor. Therefore, the Prophet (sawas) clearly proclaimed it among a large gathering of Muslims and asked the them to swear their allegiance to him; and on the day of Ghadir, he said his last words to all those who were there and those who were not there.

The holy Prophet (sawas) proved his intelligence, farsightedness, enthusiasm to his nation and everlasting relation with the unseen world and Divine knowledge – which made Islam the last religion which provided a base for the targets of the Prophet’s(sawas)prophecy – in the history as well as for his contemporaries as a political and experienced leader. The holy Prophet (sawas) was well aware of how much the people knew about the basis of Islamic prophecy and its values in his time. He also knew that the new Muslims, who had accepted the directorship of the Prophet (sawas), still were the victims of fanaticism and the traditions of the age of ignorance. He knew it was very difficult to remove these things from among them with short-term programs. Those researchers who know about the

1. **Fadak fi al-Tarikh**, Sayyid Mohammad Baqir al-Sadr pp.102-105.

difficulties of the age of the Prophet (sawas) also believe that it was not possible to remove those difficulties immediately.

Therefore, after deviation of the nation from the Prophet's (sawas) orders, it was necessary to show patience and endurance. It was also essential to organise accurate plans under the shelter of the Islamic government, to train the people so that the necessary conditions could be created to control the people, while achieving all goals correctly.

Imam 'Ali (as) and Compilation of the holy Qur'an

Sound traditions report that after the burial ceremony of the Prophet (sawas), Imam 'Ali (as) began compiling the verses and chapters of the holy Qur'an, according to the order of revelation. These verses were presented in an outspread table format:

It has been narrated from Imam Sadiq (sawas) that the holy Prophet (sawas) said to 'Ali (as): "O 'Ali (as)! The Qur'an which is in written form on pieces of silk and paper is lying under my bed. Take and compile it. Do not destroy it like Jews who destroyed the Torah. And 'Ali (as) started his mission of compilation of the holy Book and compiled it on a yellow cloth."[1]

Also it is narrated: At the time of the Prophet's (sawas) demise, Imam 'Ali (as) became so unhappy with the behaviour of the Muslims that he took an oath that he would not put his cloak on his shoulders until he compiled the holy Book. Therefore, he went home and compiled the holy Qur'an within three days.[2]

It is narrated: Imam 'Ali (as) did not meet anyone for three days until he completed the compilation of the holy Qur'an. Then he put his cloak on his shoulder and went among his adversaries who had gathered into mosque. When he reached in the middle, he put the holy Qur'an in between and said:

The Messenger of Allah (sawas) said: "Verily I am leaving among you two precious things [Thaqalayn]: the Book of Allah and my

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1. **Tafsir al-Qummi** 2:451, al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 89: 48 h.7.
2. **Fihrist Ibn al- Nadim** p. 30. al-Hasakani, **Shawahid al-Tanzil** 1: 36 h. 23.

progeny [itrah], the members of my household [Ahl al-Bayt]. If you hold fast to them, you shall never go astray. These two will never separate from each other until they meet me at the Pond [hawd] (of Kawthar)" Now this is the Book of Allah and I am the progeny of the Messenger (sawas)." Then he said to them: I said my previous words to you so that tomorrow you do not complain that we did not know that.[1]

Then he said:

"Do not complain on the Day of Judgment that I did not call you for help and did not recall my right in front of you and did not call you to the Book of Allah from al-Fatiha till the last chapter."

When hearing these words, Omar replied to Imam ‘Ali (as): If you have the Qur'an, we also have a copy of it; and we do not need you and your Qur'an.[2]

It is certain that Imam ‘Ali (as) not only compiled the holy Qur'an, but compiled it on the basis of order of revelation. Moreover, he pointed to the common verses, special verses, absolute verses, bound verses, clear defined verses, allegorical verses, abrogating verses, abrogated verses, those verses calling towards good, those verses forbidding from evils, formalities of the verses and the dates of their revelation. He also mentioned the cause of revelation, and dictated 60 different branches of Qur'anic knowledge and gave one example for each of them. With this precious work, Imam Ali (as) was successful to preserve one of the most important principles and elements of Islam. He was also successful in leading the Muslims to think towards research and to study the branches of Qur'anic knowledge, so that the Qur'an transformed into a real and direct source needed by human beings in order to remove their difficulties.

The *master of the faithful* (Amir al-Mu'minin) had these qualities. He said: "The Messenger of Allah (sawas) recited every verse for me as soon as it was revealed to him. He dictated to me the verse and I wrote it down in my own writing. He taught me the

1. Ibn Shahr'ashub, **Manaqib** 2: 41, al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 28: 265& 89: 41.
2. Ibn Shahr'ashub, **Manaqib** 2:41, al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 40:155-156.

allegorical expression, interpretation, abrogation, definition, allegory of these verses and prayed from Allah the Almighty that He may teach me their meaning. Then I neither forgot any verse from the holy Book, nor forgot the knowledge which I was dictated by the holy Prophet (sawas), but I noted them. He taught me the knowledge of every Haram, Halal, good, evil; obedience and sins of the present as well as the future, and I remembered them and even did not forget a single word of them."[1]

In the Time of Abu Bakr:

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

"I swear by Allah that at the junction it could not even be imagined that the Arabs would snatch the seat of the caliphate from the family and descendents of the Holy Prophet (sawas) and that they would be swearing the oath of allegiance for the caliphate of a different person.

At every stage I kept myself aloof from that struggle of supremacy and power-politics till I found the heretics had openly taken to heresy and schism and were trying to undermine and ruin the religion preached by our Holy Prophet (sawas). I felt afraid that, even after seeing and recognizing the evil, if I did not stand up to help Islam and the Muslims it would be a worse calamity to me than my losing authority and power over you, which was only a transient and short-lived affair. Therefore, when I stood up amidst the sweeping surge of innovations and schism, the dark clouds of heresy dispersed, falsehood and schism were crushed and the religion was saved."[2]

Despite all the incidents which occurred after the demise of the Prophet (sawas) in an environment filled with revengefulness, fanaticism, it was a time when the Muslims were walking on a road which was not the right path, one they should not have had to step on. Still Imam 'Ali (as) did not forget this reality that he was made

1. Al-Kulayni, **al-Kafi** 1: 63-64. **al-Khisal al-Saduq**, p. 257-258, al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 26: 256-257, **Kifaiat al-Talib al-Kangi** p.199, **al-Itqan li al-Suyuti** 2: 187.
2. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 3: 118/sermon 62.

the administrator of the Ummah and also had the responsibility of fulfilling the Islamic orders among them.

With his oath of allegiance to Abu Bakr, Imam ‘Ali’s (as) rights were snatched and he was left in loneliness. The recommendations of the holy Prophet (sawas) about Imam ‘Ali (as) and the promise which he took from ‘Ali (as) made him a great symbol of the defender of Islam in all times; this promise was commanded by Allah the Almighty for guarding his Ummah, stopping the dispersion and destruction of prophetic mission and Islamic society.

This is the reason that Imam ‘Ali (as) benefited from every single chance and whenever the ruling parties faced a problem, which they could not solve themselves and asked Imam ‘Ali (as) for help, Imam ‘Ali (as) helped them solve it and explained the religious laws for them. In this way he taught his nation the correct rules; a nation who was not completely familiar with the Divine laws, yet. Therefore, Imam ‘Ali (as) was always the standard of justice for the Muslims in the time of Abu Bakr's caliphate as well as the period of other caliphs after him.

Imam ‘Ali (as) and some of his sincere companions, who had helped him in all his difficulties, tried to defend Al-Madinah from those who were deviating from the Islamic path.

Abu Bakr gives the caliphate to Omar

Imam ‘Ali (as) was always made the victim of oppression and his rights were snatched. He was very sad to see that the caliphate was snatched and the prophetic mission was being weakened, but he had no other option but to tolerate this situation. He always thought positively. In his famous sermon, which is known as Shashaqiyeh, he clearly mentioned his sorrows, saying:

"Beware! By Allah, the son of Abu Quhafah (Abu Bakr) dressed himself with it (the caliphate) and he certainly knew that my position in relation to it was the same as the position of the axis in relation to the hand-mill. Flood water flows down from me and the bird cannot fly up to me. I put a curtain against the caliphate and kept myself detached from it.

Then I began to think whether I should assault or calmly endure the blinding darkness of tribulations wherein adults are enfeebled and the young grow old and the true believer acts under strain till he meets Allah (on his death). I found that endurance thereon was wiser.

So I adopted patience although there was pricking in the eye and suffocation (of mortification) in the throat. I watched the plundering of my inheritance till the first one went his way but handed over the Caliphate to Ibn al-Khattab after himself.

(Then he quoted al-A`sha's verse).

My days are now passed on the camel's back (in difficulty) while there were days (of ease) when I enjoyed the company of Jabir's brother, Hayyan.

It is strange that during his lifetime, he wished to be released from the caliphate but he confirmed it for the other one after his death.No doubt these two shared its udders strictly among themselves. This one put the Caliphate in a tough enclosure where the utterance was haughty and the touch was rough. Mistakes were in plenty and so also the excuses therefore."[1]

The period of Abu Bakr's caliphate did not last long. He fell ill and soon died. Before his death, he decided to make Omar his successor and the next caliph, but most of migrants and Ansars objected to his decision. They clearly mentioned their disagreement with Abu Bakr's decision, because they were well-aware of Omar's rude manner with the people.[2]

However, Abu Bakr did not change his mind. He called Uthman bin Affan and asked him to write his will about the caliphate of Omar. He said to Uthman: Write down: In the name of Allah, the Benevolent, the Merciful. This is the recommendation of Abu Bakr bin Abu Quhafa to the Muslims, afterwards… saying this he became unconscious. While he was unconscious, Uthman bin Affan wrote: I have chosen Omar bin Khitab for my succession and I think I have not withheld from your benevolence. Then Abu

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1. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 1: 30-32.
2. **Al-Tabaqat al-Kubra** 3: 199, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 2: 425, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 1: 164.

Bakr came to his senses and asked Uthman: Read what you have written. Uthman read what he had written for Abu Bakr. Abu Bakr said: God is Great. He also said: I think you were afraid that if I die in this condition there would be disputes among the Muslims!

Uthman replied: Yes, I was.

Abu Bakr said: God bless you!

The Criticisms of Abu Bakr's Will

Imam ‘Ali (as) was unhappy with the method of Abu Bakr for the following reasons:

Abu Bakr did not consult anyone from the Muslims other than Abdull-Rahman bin Auf and Uthman bin Affan for appointing the next caliph because these two persons were completely aware that Abu Bakr inclined to introduce Omar as his successor and the next caliph. On the other hand, Abu Bakr was afraid that if he consulted the Muslims, some of the sincere companions of the Prophet (sawas) would disagree with him and would stop him from choosing Omar as caliph.

He insisted on keeping Imam ‘Ali (as) away from political matters and the issue of his succession and did not consult him in this regard, although he consulted ‘Ali (as) in every difficult matter and asked him for help. Or, he knew that only ‘Ali’s (as) opinion about Omar's caliphate was sincere and unchangeable.

•By saying, "I have made Omar my successor. Listen to what he says and obey his orders," Abu Bakr actually imposed Omar on the Muslims by force, as if he had guardianship of the Muslims both during his life and after his death, although, he was observing the signs of anger on the faces of most of companions of the Prophet (sawas).
•He claimed that he was continuing the mission of the Prophet (sawas), but actually there was a great contradiction behind his claim. He was of the belief that the Holy Prophet (sawas) did not appoint anyone as his successor after himself, while we observe that he appointed his friend Omar as his successor after his death.
•Abu Bakr provides ground for the government of Bani Umayah who were the cause of many troubles for Islam. He enhanced their

greed for caliphate and encouraged them for it. He said to Uthman: If Omar was not there, I would choose no one but you![1]Abu Bakr knew that Uthman was a sensitive person and he was inclined to Bani Umayah. He also knew that Uthman could lead them to power and he was right.

1. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 1: 164.

CHAPTER THREE
IMAM 'ALI (AS) DURING THE REIGN OF OMAR

Abu Bakr left the seat of caliphate for Omar who very easily and without any kind of disagreement from the Migrants and Ansars occupied it. He took the control of the government and starting ruling the people forcefully and rudely. This was to such an extent that the elders from the companions of the Prophet (sawas) tried their best to prevent any kind of conflict with him.[1] After their success in politics, the ignorant Quraysh restarted their policies to make people support the lack of rights for Bani Hashim; on the other hand, Omar also strengthened this idea.

But when the *master of the faithful* (Amir al-Mu'minin) observed the actions of the ruling party and insisted of the ignorant partisans on deviation of the caliphate, he did not try to get back his snatched right – the caliphate – but played the role of a sincere and trustworthy person, helping the new caliph. Imam 'Ali (as) was aware of his responsibility and therefore, he was known as a trustworthy member of the Ummah and the prophetic mission. He played his part as much as he could to lead the Islamic society on the right path. He also enhanced his participation in the teaching of religious laws and justice more than in the time of Abu Bakr, because it was demanded at this time. On the other hand, since the Islamic realm had begun to grow larger and larger, new and unexpected problems also began to come into being. These were not solvable by the new caliph and his partisans. In such cases, Omar asked Imam 'Ali (as) for help and respectfully listened to what he said, immediately ordering all to act upon Imam's (as) suggestions. It was to an extent that so many times he said: "May

1. **Tarikh al-Tabari** 2: 617-618.

Allah not involve me in a problem when Abul Hassan (sawas) is not with me."[1]

It had been narrated that once Omar wanted a mad woman to be stoned for she was accused of rape. Imam 'Ali (as) rejected his judgment and reminded him of the Prophet's(sawas)Hadith in which the Prophet (sawas) had said: "Three people have been forgotten: a mad person unless he gets better, a sleeping person unless he awakes from dreams and a child who does not have the sense to separate the good from the evil." When Omar heard this, he said: "If 'Ali (as) had not been there, Omar would have died."[2]

Omar's Conduct[3]

•He behaved badly and harshly with the people and so forcefully, that his relatives as well as strangers were afraid of him. Among his harsh behaviour, we can mention a pregnant woman who, consulting him was so fearful of him that she had a miscarriage. Also we can mention his behaviour to Jabillah, who because of his behaviour abandoned the religion of Islam and returned to Rome.[4]
•He did not distribute the treasury equally among the people, but did so in a way which was not confirmed by the Prophet (sawas) and the Book of Allah, also having the aspect of prejudice. The result of this action was a classification between people in later years. The genealogists started compiling the genealogies and the races.[5] This action became the reason of anger of non-Arabs towards Arabs. By doing this, Omar actually disagreed and nullified not only the method of the Prophet (sawas), but also the way of his friend Abu Bakr. During the last days of his life, when he observed a large amount of wealth of some of the companions of the Prophet (sawas), he was sorry for his deeds. He said: "If I had observed what I am observing now, I would have taken the

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1. Al-Qada al-Maghribi, **Sharh al-Akhbar** 2: 317, al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 40: 148, al-Khawarizmi, **al-Manaqib**, pp.96-97. and Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 1: 18. **Yanabi'a al-Mawadah** 1: 277.
2. Sheikh al-Mufid, **Kitab al-Irshad** 1: 203.
3. Al-Nas wa al-Ijtihad, **Sayid Abdull-Hussain Sharaf al-Din** p. 148.
4. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 1: 174&183.
5. **Tarikh al-Tabari** 3: 291-292.

surplus wealth of the rich men and would have distributed it among the poor and needy."

•He did not choose the rulers and officials according to Islamic bases, which were known as preservers of the nation, but chose those people for directorship who were famous for corruption and carelessness towards Islam. Actually, he insisted in keeping those people away from Imam ‘Ali (as) and his companions, who were related to caliphate.[1]

•He treated all of his officials very strictly, except Mu’awiyah. Mu’awiyah was free to do whatever he wanted for years. This helped Mu’awiyah in his refractoriness in Damascus in the time of Uthman. It has been narrated that Uthman explained his deeds saying: "He is the king (kisra) of Arabs."[2]

The Problem of Council (Shuraa)

If – according to Omar – the gathering of Saqifah and allegiance of Abu Bakr was an imprudent action and Allah the Almighty kept the Muslims safe from it, we must say that the council of Omar was a greater split and disturbance on the way of prophetic mission and it was a bigger deviation from the right path. In fact, this council was a test for Muslims, leading them to calamities and difficulties; bringing them many misfortunes, while putting them in great danger and difficulties. A number of conspiracies came into being in order to keep ‘Ali (as) away from caliphate and government. They did this without showing any interest in the destiny of the nation, and did not fear the blame of their conscience.

When Omar was disappointed with his life, because of the wounds he had and when he was told: Choose a successor for yourself, he said: I swear by God, that I failed to lead you the way I should have both in my life and after my death. Then he added: The reason behind choosing a successor for me is that the person – Abu Bakr – who was better than me also did so; and if I neglect it, the reason would be that he – the Prophet (sawas) who was better than

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1. Sheikh al-Madirah abu Hurayrah, **Mahmud abu Ria** p. 48.
2. Ibn Kathir, **al-Bidayah wa’l-Nihayah** 8: 134, **Sharh al-Akhbar** 2: 164, Ibn 'Asakir, **Tarikh Madinat Dimashq** 59: 144.

me, also did the same thing. Then he felt sorry for the loss of those who helped him to reach the caliphate. He said: If Ubaideh was alive, I would make him my successor because he was trustworthy; and if Salim – the slave of Abu Huzaifah – was alive I would choose him as my successor because he was very pious person.

Omar was requested: "O leader of pious people! Choose someone as your successor." He replied: "I had decided that after addressing you, I would think about someone to be my successor and will choose someone who is the most suitable person for this post, so that he can guide you on the right path." While saying this he pointed towards 'Ali (as), "But when I became unconscious, I dreamed that a person came into his garden and collected all the fruits of his trees – the ripe and unripe ones – and then put them under his feet. I understood the Allah is the overpowering and He will take Omar's soul. Therefore, I want to choose a group who were given the good news of paradise by the Prophet (sawas) for you which consists of: 'Ali (as), Uthman, Abdur Rahman, Sa'ad, Zubair bin Awaam and Talha bin Abdullah. This group should choose a person from among themselves for caliphate; and all the Muslims should follow the person who will be chosen as the caliph."[1]

Omar ordered: Take these six people to a place so that one of them be chosen as the caliph within three days. The caliph will be someone chosen by the majority or if there was a tie, the one who would be chosen by the group in which Abdull-Rahman bin Auf will be, is the caliph. Every person who disagrees should be beheaded. Then he ordered that Suhaib Romi should say the prayers as Imam for three days, so that the Muslims could choose the next caliph for them. Then he asked the Ansarsto be present in the place without playing any role in the matter of caliphate.[2]

When the members of the council came to Omar, he criticized them with rudeness.These wordings could not be the reason for

1. **Tarikh al-Tabari** 3:292; Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 3: 66.
2. **Al-imamah wa siyasah**: 42, Ibn Sa'd, **al-Tabaqat al-Kubra** 3: 261, **Tarikh al-Tabari** 3: 294, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 3: 68.

choosing correct persons for leadership, so that they could take the Muslims out of the crises of that time.

Omar said: O Sa'ad! I swear by God! Although you are the man of war, I will not choose you for caliphate because of your rudeness; O Abdulal-Rahman! You are the Pharaoh of this nation; O Zubair! You are sincere towards the people only when you are happy, otherwise, you resemble to pagans when you are angry; I refuse to choose Talha for this post because of his pride and revengefulness because if he becomes the caliph, he will give his ring to his wife; and you O Uthman! I will not choose you for you take the side of your family; and O Ali! I will not choose you because of your interest for caliphate, but you are the most suitable person for this post and if you are chosen as the caliph, you will lead the people on the right path.[1]

The Objections on (shuraa) the Council of Omar

The council that was developed by Omar was invalid, having lots of contradictions in it. There were some clear points which made us believe that this system was not based on truth and had been developed without much consideration and care. For example:

•The nominees of elections were not chosen by the people through election since the people did not participate in election to make them the candidates. Therefore, this system could not be given the title of council. Another reason which compels us not to accept this (so called) gathering as council is that it was developed by a single person (Omar); in other words, Omar had imposed this gathering on the people and had told them that they would soon receive the news of selection of a new leader and caliph. Omar had threatened the people of the council to take part in it, otherwise they would have been killed.

•The people taking part in the council had different and contradictory ideas and personalities. Each of the candidates had their own ideas and hidden agendas. A question arises here, that how could their vote be equal to the vote of the nation? On the

1. **Al-imamah wa siyasah**: 43, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 1: 185-186.

other hand, after the gathering of the council, disagreements among some of the members occurred, which lead the Muslims towards disturbances and dispersion.[1]

•There was a contradiction in Omar's words regarding the selection of choosing the members of his council. In Saqifah, when he was arguing for the caliphate of Abu Bakr, he said the caliphate belonged to the Quraysh and insisted on his words, but we can see that during last days of his life, he wished that if Salim, a slave of Abu Huzaifeh whom he had freed, was alive, he (Omar) would choose him as the next caliph.

•On the other hand, he chose a number of companions from amongst all the companions of the Prophet (sawas), who according to him, were the people of which the Prophet (sawas) had given the good news of paradise, but later on he related some sins and unfavourable qualities that were against what he had said earlier about them. Then he ordered Suhaib to say the prayers as Imam, which shows that according to his belief, there was no relation between prayers and the caliphate and it was not important. But we can see that when in Saqifahhe was favouring Abu Bakr as the next caliph, one of his strong reasons was the prayers for which he thought Abu Bakr as the most suitable person.

•At first he wanted to choose 'Ali (as) as the next caliph, because he was of the belief that 'Ali (as) would guide the people on the right path, but after his dream during his unconscious state, he refused to choose him as the next caliph. It was as if he wanted to degrade 'Ali's (as) position.

•Omar said that I do not like to take the control of caliphate during my life as well as after death, but by choosing the members of the council for voting for the next caliph, he showed that he was still dominating the nation.

•It seems that choosing the next caliphate was pre-planned providing the necessary ground for Uthman to be chosen as the next caliph, not 'Ali (as) who had been already chosen by Allah the Exalted and his Prophet (sawas) and who was the most suitable person to guide the nation of Muhammad (sawas).Talha was nominated as a candidate to strengthen the revengefulness of Bani Teem, because, at the time of Abu Bakr, Imam 'Ali (as) was

1. **Tadhkirat al-Khawas** 1: 349-351.

known as their opposition. And now they were opposing Talha – another candidate for caliph. Uthman was nominated to prove the revengefulness of Bani Umayah and strengthen their hunger for power and governing.Abdull-Rahman and Sa'ad were nominated to open another political line of battle between them and Imam ‘Ali (as), because they belonged to Bani Zuhra and had relation with Bani Umayah. So it was manifest that if there was a competition between Uthman and Imam ‘Ali (as), they would show their inclination to Uthman.

•Omar ordered that if the members of the council did not agree with each other and disobey, they should be beheaded. How can there be a relation between Omar's order and the narration, which he quoted from the Prophet (sawas) in which he said that the Prophet (sawas) was very happy with these six people? Does a disagreement with Omar become the reason to behead the companions of the Prophet (sawas)?[1]

A Historical Discussion between Omar and Ibn Abbas

It has been narrated: There was a discussion between Omar and Ibn Abbas on the issue of caliphate. Omar said to Ibn Abbas: I swear upon God that after the demise of the Prophet (sawas), your cousin ‘Ali (as) is the most suitable person for his succession, but we fear regarding him for two reasons.

Ibn Abbas said: O commander of faithful! What are those two reasons?

Omar replied: The first reason is his youth, and the second reason is his inclination towards the family of Abdul Muttalib.

In one of the gatherings where Ibn Abbas was also present, Omar said to Ibn Abbas: O Ibn Abbas! Do you know why theQuraysh are keeping you away from caliphate?

Ibn Abbas replied: No.

Omar said: But I know.

Ibn Abbas said: What is the reason?

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1. **Tarikh al-Tabari** 3: 293

Omar said: Because Quraysh was not willing that both the prophecy and caliphate be in your hands and you may oppress the people. Therefore, they thought about their plans and chose a favourable future for themselves and thus they were successful in what they wanted.

Ibn Abbas said: If I say something in this regard, will the commander of the faithful not be angry with me?

Omar guaranteed his life and gave him permission to say whatever he wanted to.

Ibn Abbas said: You said that Quraysh was unwilling. (You must know what) Allah the most Exalted has said about unwilling people:

﴿ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَرِهُوا۟ مَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ فَأَحْبَطَ أَعْمَـٰلَهُمْ﴾

"That is because they loathed what Allah has sent down, so He made their works fail."[1]

But you said that we might have oppressed the people. (You should know that) if we were the oppressors in our caliphate, we would oppress the people as the relatives of the Prophet (sawas) (which was a much stronger reason for oppression), but (keep in mind) that we are the people whose manners are of the Prophet's (sawas) manner; the Prophet (sawas) about who Allah the most Exalted has said:

﴿وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ﴾

"And indeed you possess a great character."[2]

As well as He said:

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1. *Surat Mohammad, 47: 9.*
2. *Surat Al-Qalam, 68: 4.*

﴿وَٱخۡفِضۡ جَنَاحَكَ لِمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ﴾

"And lower your wing to the faithful who follow you."[1]

But you said: Quraysh chose a person who they wanted to choose. (Be aware that) Allah the Almighty has said:

﴿وَرَبُّكَ يَخۡلُقُ مَا يَشَآءُ وَيَخۡتَارُۗ مَا كَانَ لَهُمُ ٱلۡخِيَرَةُ﴾

"Your Lord creates whatever He wishes and chooses. They have no choice. Immaculate is Allah and exalted above having [any partners they ascribe] to Him."[2]

O commander of faithful! You understood (from these verses) that Allah the Almighty choses whosoever He wanted from His servants, and if Quraysh has chosen someone according to Divine selection, they certainly have been victorious.

Omar thought for a while and then said: O Ibn Abbas! Keep quiet! Your hearts always have favoured treachery against Quraysh and you always have been revengeful to them and this is something everlasting.

Ibn Abbas said: O commander of faithful! Be quiet! And do not relate treachery to Bani Hashim because their hearts are known as the heart of the Prophet (sawas) and God has made them clean and decorated. They are the family about who Allah the Almighty has said in the holy Book:

﴿إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ لِيُذۡهِبَ عَنكُمُ ٱلرِّجۡسَ أَهۡلَ ٱلۡبَيۡتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمۡ تَطۡهِيرًا﴾

"Stay in your houses and do not display your finery with the display of the former [days of] ignorance. Maintain prayer and pay the zakat, and obey Allah and His Apostle. Indeed Allah

1. *Surat Al-Shuara, 26: 215.*
2. *Surat Al-Qasas, 28: 68.*

desires to repel all impurity from you, O People of the Household, and purify you with a thorough purification."[1]

Then Ibn Abbas addressing Omar said: You talked about hatred and vengeance. (Tell me) how is it possible for a person whose right has been snatched to remain free from vengeance and hatred, while he is beholding his right in the control of someone else?

Omar became angry and shouted to Ibn Abbas – but suddenly he remembered something which he always hid from Ibn Abbas. He said: O Ibn Abbas! You are saying interesting words! I have received some news about you which I do not want to share with you, because I am afraid after hearing it you will lose your post and position near me!

Ibn Abbas said: Is it possible for the commander of the faithful to tell me what is the news? Tell me about it; if it is useless and irrelative news, then be sure that someone like me will keep it away from me; and if it is true, then I am sure it will not decline my position and post against you.

Omar said: I have been told that you always say that the caliphate has been snatched from us because of jealousy and oppression.

Ibn Abbas did not move from his place and replied very bravely: Yes, this action was done because of jealousy. Adam was also the victim of Satan and because of him was sent out of the Paradise. We were also oppressed. O commander of faithful! You are well aware to whom the caliphate belonged? Is it not so that Arab for Non-Arabs and Quraysh for the rest of the tribes presented the reason of being the Prophet's (sawas) relatives? If it is so then we are more suitable for being the relatives of the Prophet (sawas) than Quraysh and other tribes.

Omar said: O Ibn Abbas! Get away from me!

When he observed that Ibn Abbas stood and wanted to leave, he feared that this may have been disrespectful towards him. Therefore, he quickly and kindly said to him: O Ibn Abbas! I will favour your rights in government.

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1. *Surat Al-Ahzab, 33: 33.*

Ibn Abbas noticed his behaviour and turned to him saying very seriously: O commander of the faithful! I, being the relative of the Prophet (sawas), have rights towards you and all the Muslims. Whosoever observes this right, he has observed his own right and whoever destroys it, he has destroyed his own rights.[1]

The Council and Viewpoint of 'Ali (as)

After the positioning of Omar and the choosing of Imam 'Ali (as) as a member of the council, the sadness of Imam 'Ali (as) increased. Imam 'Ali (as) came to know that there was something wrong with this selection, and its purpose was for Omar to keep him away from the caliphate and deviate the Islamic government from its real path. As soon as Imam 'Ali (as) left Omar, his Uncle Abbas came to meet him and Imam 'Ali (as) said to him: "Dear Uncle! Our caliphate has been given to someone else."

Abbas said: How do you know?

'Ali (as) said: For this reason that Uthman has been made my opponent. Omar said in the gathering: The caliph will be someone who will be chosen by the majority or if there was a tie, the one who would be chosen by the group in which Abdull-Rahman bin Auf will be, is the caliph. Now Sa'ad will not go against his cousin Abdull-Rahman while Abdull-Rahman is the son-in-law of Uthman and they have no problems with each other. Therefore, Abdull-Rahman will swear his allegiance or will give the caliphate to Uthman or vice versa. (Dear Uncle) for example, if the remaining two persons agree with me, still it will be useless.[2]

Imam 'Ali (as) analyzed the problem very well. With the conspiracy of Uthman and Abdur Rahman, the caliphate was given to Uthman. It has been narrated that: Sa'ad withdrew for his cousin Abdull- Rahman, Talha also showed inclination towards Uthman.

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1. **Al-Mustarshid** p. 351-355, al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 31:71-73, **Tarikh al-Tabari** 3:289, **al-Jawahiri al-saqifa wa Fadak**: 131-132. Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 3:63-65.
2. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 12:262, Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 3:67, **Tarikh al-Tabari** 3:294. Ibn Shibah, **Tarikh al-Madinah** 3: 925.

Only Zubair withdrew for Imam 'Ali (as). Now it was the time for Abdull-Rahman whether to choose Imam 'Ali (as) or go with Uthman. Ammar said to Abdur Rahman: If you want there to be no opposition among the Muslims, swear your allegiance to Imam 'Ali (as). On the other hand, Ibn Abi Sarah said to him: If you do not wish a dispute among Quraysh, choose Uthman as caliph. And in this way, the caliphate was put on the wrong way and the signs of deviation – which were being strengthened by prejudice – came into being.

Abdull-Rahman offered his allegiance to Imam 'Ali (as) with a condition that he would act according to the Book of Allah, the Sunnah of his Prophet (sawas) and the method of Abu Bakr and Omar. Imam 'Ali (as) did not accept the condition of acting according to Abu Bakr and Omar; but Uthman accepted his offer. And in this way Abdull-Rahman swore his allegiance to Uthman. Imam 'Ali (as) addressing Abdull-Rahman said:

"You gave it to him forever. This is not the first time you have oppressed us. We will tolerate and will ask Allah the Almighty for help in what you are saying."

"I swear by God that you did this to me. (By this act) you wanted the same thing which your friends wanted from their friend. May Allah separate you from each other."[1]

Then Imam 'Ali (as) turned towards the people so that he could tell them about their repeated mistake related to caliphate. He also wanted to make them aware of his viewpoint regarding the future of the Islamic Mission. He said to them:[2]

"You have certainly known that I am the most rightful of all others for the Caliphate. By Allah, so long as the affairs of Muslims remain intact and there is no oppression in it save on myself, I shall keep quiet, seeking reward for it (from Allah) and keeping aloof from its attractions and allurements for which you aspire."[3]

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1. **Ibn ShibahTarikh al-Madinah** 3:929-930, **Tarikh al-Tabari** 3:296-298, Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 3:70-71.
2. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 1:188.
3. Ibid, 1:124, al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 29:612.

Imam ‘Ali (as) entered the council along with the other members. He was sure that his right- the caliphate- would be returned to him. Another reason for the Imam’s (as) entrance in the council was to manifest the contradiction of Omar and his partisans' wording, because, at the time of the Prophet’s(sawas)demise, Omar thought that it was unfair to collect the prophecy and caliphate in one family, but he had now nominated Imam ‘Ali (as) as a candidate of his council.[1]

It has been narrated that Imam ‘Ali (as) said:

"But now I will join his council, because Omar has now accepted me as a suitable person for caliphate, although in the past he said: prophecy and caliphate can not be collected in one family."

Imam ‘Ali (as) swore his allegiance to Uthman bin Affan, so as to be able to defend the nature of the Ummah. For this he used every possible means, such as advice, counsel, guidance and training. Although, they had kept the caliphate away from Imam ‘Ali (as), he always manifested the truth and guided the people on the right path. Whenever the caliph became helpless, Imam ‘Ali (as) would help him; whenever he did not know how to solve a problem, Imam ‘Ali (as) would teach him the way to solve it; and when the caliph oppressed someone, Imam ‘Ali (as) would stop him.

Imam ‘Ali (as) and the Reason behind Rejection of Abdull-Rahman bin ‘Awf’s Condition

The opposition of Imam ‘Ali (as) against the two caliphs was not because of his personal interest or special policy. He did this for religious policies, the Ummah and Islamic targets which were completely free from his violent desires.

Imam (as), during all his positioning, had clear Qur'anic reasons. Behind his every decision, there was a religious policy. Imam ‘Ali (as) had the responsibility to take control of people's affairs so that a clash between the Islamic mission and those affairs which could take Islam away from its real targets would not occur. Imam ‘Ali (as) did not accept the offer of allegiance from Abdull-

1. Ibn Tawus, **al-Tara'if**: 484, Al-Shirazi, **Kitab al-Arba’unp.** 249. Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 1:189.

Rahman – who had demanded Imam 'Ali (as) to swear that he would act according to Abu Bakr and Omar's caliphate – because in the presence of the Qur'an and Sunnah there could not be another thing like the conduct of Sheikhein (Abu Bakr and Omar) in the principles of faith. If Imam 'Ali (as) accepted the allegiance of Abdull-Rahman under these conditions, it would have meant that Imam 'Ali (as) had also accepted the conduct of Abu Bakr and Omar as the Sunnah of the Prophet (sawas). There were many contradictions in the conducts of the Sheikhein. Moreover, their conducts were contradictory to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of the Prophet (sawas).[1]

In addition to this, Imam 'Ali (as) was well aware that in the absence of the Prophet (sawas), he had to play the role of the educator for the people. Therefore, it was not suitable for Imam 'Ali (as) to accept acting according to the ex caliphs, because, in this case he would have to reject their conduct in future. The same thing was done by Uthman. He accepted to rule the nation according to the conducts of the ex caliphs, but could not remain true to word.

1. Abdull-Hussain Sharaf al-Din, al-Nas wa al-Ijtihad. al-Alamah al-Amini (al-Ghadir).

CHAPTER FOUR
IMAM 'ALI (AS) DURING THE REIGN OF UTHMAN

The commander of the faithful introduces the era of Uthman in the following manner:

"With him the children of his grand-father, (Umayyah) also stood up swallowing Allah's wealth like a camel devouring the foliage of spring, till his rope broke, his actions finished him and his gluttony brought him down to earth."[1]

Uthman was not as cunning as the two caliphs before him in the field of politics and did not have the power to run the affairs of nation with much care. Therefore, as soon as he was imposed as caliph on the people by Bin Auf, and when he brought them in the mosque of the Prophet (sawas) to express his ideas about the new government, he went on the pulpit of the Prophet (sawas) and sat exactly where the Prophet (sawas) sat, although, Omar and Abu Bakr sat one step lower than the Prophet (sawas) had done. Then he addressed the people. Some of the people in that gathering said: Today evil has been born.[2]

Uthman did not have control of his words. The sentences which he said during his address to the people consisted of this:

Then, this is the first difficult responsibility. I am not a speaker and God knows it better. Someone, between whom and Adam there is not a distance more than a dead father, should take advice.[3]

Yaqoobi says: Uthman stood up and for a long time said nothing at all. Then he started: Abu Bakr and Omar had said much in these

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1. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 1:35, Sheikh al-Mufid, **Kitab al-Irshad**1:288-289.
2. **Tarikh al-Ya'qubi** 2:163.
3. **Al-Tabaqat al-Kubra** 3:62, Ibn Kathir **al-Bidaiah wa al-Nihayah** 7:177.

situations. You people need a just leader more than a good speaker. If you live in this condition, you should be waiting for unfavourable outcomes." And then he came down from the pulpit.[1]

Uthman started his ruling with such actions which made everyone else unhappy and revengeful, except for Bani Umayah. He officially allowed the presence of his tribe in his court; gave them good posts in government and imposed them on the people. He distributed the governmental posts among them and gave them free control of governmental affairs. They could play with the government according to their wishes and there was no hurdle for them in this regard. Uthman crossed the limitations of tribal system which Abu Bakr and Omar had fixed for him. He restricted all important posts in the family of Bani Umayah.

He did not listen to the advices of the companions of the Prophet (sawas), especially Imam 'Ali (as). He came to power at a time when the tribal system was at his peak and the great personalities had lost their importance in the government due to unnecessary changes which occurred in politics and government. The politics of Abu Bakr and Omar – on the basis of which they kept Imam 'Ali (as) away from government – had a great affect on the formation of new political groups, as well as the deviation of the government. Therefore, it was not easy for the third caliph to listen to suggestions and advice of the people because of the hypocrites who were always with him.

Abu Sufyan after the Allegiance of Uthman

When the ceremony of allegiance to Uthman was finished, Abu Sufyan also accompanied him to his house. His house was full of the people of his tribe who were exultant for their political victory. Abu Sufyan also looked very happy, although a revengeful smile was obvious on his lips. The religion of Islam had removed their pride and self-conceit for a while, but now the pride was once again clear everywhere in the place. Abu Sufyan shot a glance here and there and asked the people who had come to the house of Uthman: Is there any stranger among us?

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1. **Tarikh al-Ya'qubi** 2:163.

They said: No, there is not.

He said: O Bani Umayah! Pass the caliphate from one to another like a ball. I swear that there is neither paradise or hell, nor punishment and penalty. Therefore, do as I say so that the caliphate becomes the inheritance of your upcoming generations.[1]

Then he went towards the graveyard. When he reached the grave of Hazrat Hamzah, the leader of martyrs, he crushed the grave under his feet and said: O father of Omar! The caliphate for which we fought with our swords is now in the hands of our sons and they will pass it from one to another like a ball.[2]

The Negative Phenomenon in the Time of Uthman

Imam ‘Ali (as) cooperated with Abu Bakr and Omar, never openly standing against them because during their caliphate the Islamic government was secretly deviating from its real path. Imam ‘Ali (as) intervened in many problems to help make things right and the caliph accepted his opinions. Abu Bakr and Omar were very afraid of Imam ‘Ali (as) because he was the legal representative of the people and the real owner of the caliphate. On the other hand, he was the leader of the oppositional parties, which were full of companions of the Prophet (sawas).Imam ‘Ali (as) neglected his right of caliphate, therefore his opponents felt safe against Imam (as). But since Imam ‘Ali (as) was the defender of Islamic foundations and principles, he did not quit defending them and was well aware that the Prophet (sawas) had made him his heir for these virtues and principles.

Unfortunately, in the time of Uthman, disturbance and destruction became manifest, which moved from one governmental system to another and soon spread everywhere. Now, Imam ‘Ali (as) openly criticized Uthman and his government. Some of the famous companions of the Prophet (sawas) such as Ammar and Abuthar also favoured Imam ‘Ali (as) in this regard. Even those people who

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1. Al-Jawahir, **al-Saqifah wa fadak** p87, ibn abi al-Faraj **al-Aghani** 6:371, and Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 9: 53.
2. Al- Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 33: 89, **al-Ghadir** 10: 83, and Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 16:163.

were not in favour of the caliphate of Imam 'Ali (as) were angry with the government of Uthman. The government of Uthman can be summarized in the following lines:

1. Uthman was above seventy years old when he was appointed caliph. His relation to his relatives was very strong and he looked after their affairs. It has been narrated from Uthman that he said: If the keys of the paradise were in my hand, I would give all of them to Bani Umayah so that they may all enter the paradise.[1]

2. Uthman was a wealthy and squandering person prior to Islam. After accepting Islam, he continued with his ways and did not empathise with the pain of the poor. When the poor people came to him asking for help, he behaved very cruelly to them (except to those who belonged to his own tribe). For example, he was very mean to people such as Abdullah bin Mas'ood, Ammar Yasir and Abuthar.

3. He welcomed his relatives and gave them good governmental posts. For example, he appointed Walid bin Uqbah Bin Abi Mugheet as governor of Kufah – let us not forget that Walid was someone who the Prophet (sawas) had said would go to hell; Uthman made Abdullah bin abi Asrah the governor of Egypt. He gave the control of Damascus to Mu'awiyah, and had appointed Abdullah bin 'Aamir as the governor of Basra. After a while the governor of Kufah, Walid bin Aqba was replaced by Sa'eed bin Aas.[2]

4. Uthman was a very weak person compared to Marwan bin al-Hakam. He listened to Marwan and fulfilled his dictated desires. When the situation become critical, people of other cities came to Al-Madinah to criticize Uthman's governors, and asked for betterment of the political, official and economical fields and wanted the governmental officials to be replaced. Imam 'Ali (as) used to intervene insituations to restore peace, as well as give advice to people for them to return to their cities, Imam 'Ali (as)

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1. Ahmad ibn Hanbal, **al-Musnad1**: 63, Ibn 'Asakir, **Tarikh Madinat Dimashq** 39:252, Ibn Kathir, **al-Bidayah wa'l-Nihayah** 7: 200.
2. **Tarikh al-Ya'qubi** 2:164-166, al-Kamil **fi'l-Tarikh** 3: 186, **Tarikh al-Tabari** 3: 445-446.

was successful in helping the people return to their cities. The people went back to their cities on condition that Uthman would no longer follow the ideas of Marwan bin Hakam and Sa'eed bin Aas.

However, as soon as the situation came under control, Marwan once again came to the forefront and tried to convince Uthman to suppress the revolutionaries. Imam ‘Ali (as) entered with anger and said to him: "You will not agree with Marwan, neither will he unless he makes you deviate from the religion of Allah and your thoughts like a controlled and surrendered camel that goes everywhere it is told to. I swear by God! Marwan is not a person of intellect in his religion or actions."[1]

On another occasion, when Uthman was informed that Walid bin Aqabah drank wine, he became angry and ordered the informers to get away from his face. When Imam ‘Ali (as) came to know this, he went to Uthman and warned him for he had appointed such a person as a governor. Imam ‘Ali (as) sent an order for Uthman to call Walid, so that Imam ‘Ali (as) could put him on trial and serve him with his punishment. When Walid was called and the witnesses proved his sins, Imam ‘Ali (as) punished him according to Islamic Law, but Uthman became angry and said: "You do not have the right to punish him." Imam ‘Ali (as) answered him with a saying originating from Islamic law. He said: "But it is worse than that, when he does the wrong deeds, the right of Allah the Almighty is not taken back from him by not punishing him."[2]

5. The economic politics of Uthman and Omar were of the same kind. He also, like Omar, gave away the rights of someone to someone else from the government treasury on the basis of tribal categorization. However, his corruption in politics was greater than the ex-caliph. During the government of Uthman, Bani Umayah gained much wealth, and when the caliph was criticized by the treasurer of the treasure house, he said to him: "You are just a treasurer, when we give you something, accept it; and when we do not give you anything, just remain silent." The treasurer said: I

1. **Tarikh al-Ya'qubi** 3:397, al-Kamil **fi’l-Tarikh** 3: 165.
2. Al- Masoudi, **Murooj al-Dahab** 2: 336.

swear upon God that I am neither your treasurer nor your family's, but I am the treasurer of the Muslims."

On Fridays, when the treasurer entered the mosque, he found Uthman sitting on pulpit, delivering his sermon. The treasurer said: O people! Uthman thinks that I am his and his family's treasurer, but this is not true. I am the treasurer of you Muslims and now I have brought the keys of the treasury house to you. He said this and threw the keys towards the Muslims.[1]

The Positioning of Imam 'Ali (as) against Uthman

When the Muslims became angry with Uthman's actions, the companions of the Prophet (sawas) also took their positions against the deviations of Uthman and his partisans. When Uthman saw this he punished the opponents of his deviated politics severely. He even disrespected the companions of the Prophet (sawas). Some of the companions of the Prophet (sawas) -such as Abuthar Ghaffari and others- criticized Uthman. Uthman sent Abuthar to Damascus. Mu'awiyah could not bear Abuthar in Damascus, therefore, he sent him back to Al-Madinah. The presence of Abuthar was intolerable for Uthman. He decided to send him to Rabtha. He did not even allow the people to say farewell to Abuthar. 'Ali (as) along with Hassan, Hussain (as), Aqeel and Abdullah bin Ja'afar escorted Abuthar, although Marwan bin Hakam tried to stop Imam 'Ali (as) from escorting Abuthar. Imam 'Ali (as) became angry and he attacked Marwan. He beat his horse and shouted at him, saying: Go away, may Allah put you into hell."

Imam 'Ali (as) said good-bye to Abuthar and said to him:

"O Abuthar! You became angry for Allah, so be hopeful. Your opponents are afraid of you for their world and you are afraid of them for your religion. Leave the world for them and escape from everything which is dangerous for your religion. They need what you stopped them from! But you do not need what they snatched

1. **Tarikh al-Ya'qubi** 2:169, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 3:35-36. **Ansab al-Ashraf for Bilathari** 6: 140.

from you! You will soon come to know tomorrow (the Day of Judgment) who benefited and who were jealous."[1]

When ‘Ali (as) returned from escorting Abuthar, people came to see him, saying: Uthman is very angry with you! Imam ‘Ali (as) replied: Certainly - if a horse is beaten on his face, he becomes angry."[2]

The Negative Effects of Uthman's Government

Uthman followed his previous insisters by trying to keep Imam ‘Ali away from the position of leadership, and he was a leader who was not aware of how to rule according to Islamic laws. Therefore, his government left behind some very negative effects on the governments that followed him. He insulted the Muslims; the Muslims who had seen the government of their infallible leader, the holy Prophet (sawas) decay. Uthman also started faultfinding in the Islamic mission. Revolutions sparked at every part of the Islamic country which led the Muslims towards trouble and disturbances. When we study history, we find that:

1. The government of Uthman had deviated from the Islamic path which became the cause of corruption everywhere in the Islamic world. He did not do well in checking his appointed rulers' actions. This is what created anarchy in every social field and encouraged people to disobey governmental laws. For example, we can see that, during his rule, people did not care much about Islamic virtues and principles. Many high buildings were built and were made the places for drinking wine and dance.[3]

2. His government encouraged the tribal system, which was first founded by Abu Bakr. This method introduced the family of Bani Umayah as a dominant family on all governmental centres; and it introduced them as absolute kings. Since this was unfair in Islam, the power was snatched from them. When Bani Umayah saw that their power had gone, they opened a battlefield against Islam, one

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1. Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al- Balaghah** 8: 252- 253.
2. Al-Masoudi, **Murooj al-Dahab** 2:341, al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 31:182.
3. Ibn abi al-Faraj **al-Aghani** 7: 17.

that was especially aimed at the members of the holy Household of the Prophet (sawas). In later years, they became a very serious hurdle in the way of Imam 'Ali's (as) caliphate and took their position against him in the shape of bin Abu Sufyan.

3. Uthman thought the government was his right, which according to him could not be snatched away from him under any circumstances. Also the leaders of his government used their directorship as a tool to attain their deviated wishes and satanic desires. They did not use it for social benefits; neither for the enhancement of the Islamic country anywhere in the world.[1] This encouraged many people to struggle for power and government. For example, 'Amr bin Aas, Talha and Zubair did not think about anything related to the benefits of the Muslims but only struggled for power and government.

4. The government of Uthman created a large amount of wealthy persons.[2] The benefits of this group – along with the benefit of the government of Uthman – were being threatened because another group wanted the power to rule according to the Islamic laws. This made the poor and suppressed people struggle for the wealth and power in their way to attain power and to change the economical system. The revolution of Abuthar against the government was a very good example of the poverty in the time of Uthman.

5. The officials treated the opponents forcefully, which resulted a matched reaction by the oppressed ones. The people stood against the government and fought them with militarily. The death of Uthman was the peak of differences in the people's opinions about the directorship and government. A battle ensued among the different units of the Muslims. Although, the Muslims were fighting for justice and a true government, their fight was useless because of interference by the Bani Umayah and their partisans, who were inclined to defend their rule and showed their readiness for fighting against the truth in this regard.

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1. **Tarikh al-Tabari** 5: 341-346, Ibn Sa'd, **al-Tabaqat al-Kubra** 3: 64.
2. Al-Masoudi, **Murooj al-Dahab** 2: 332-334, **Ansab al-Ashraf for Bilathari** 6: 133-138.

These conditions gave a chance to those who were looking out for their own benefit and encouraged them to obtain power by force. In this way, the Islamic Ummah dispersed because of their political inclinations and every group began to struggle for power and rule.

6. The death of Uthman created a riot, which was becoming increasingly stronger. The people who were looking out for their own benefit did not swear allegiance to anyone, creating hurdles in the way of a new and legal government under the leadership of ‘Ali (as). They resisted the Imam’s (as) government and were finally successful in snatching it away from Imam ‘Ali (as) in later years under a leadership of those whofought against the Imam and became the cause of bloodshed and loss of the Muslims. Then they tried paint the correct religious inclination as a doubted culture. The reason behind this act was that they wanted to reclaim the government of Uthman and make it into a monarchy, which they considered their right, and one which they wanted to pass from one person to another. For this, they were helped by many people who were not well aware of Divine Beliefs but who rather were ignorant.

7. The armed forces, who were present everywhere in the time of Uthman, were also another cause for the revolution against Uthman's government. They had surrounded Al-Madinah and were waiting for the end of Uthman's rule. When their guesses were confirmed and they saw that the people had risen against him, they also played their role, encouraging the people to revolt. For this they used full force. This action also played a vital role in bringing an end to the government of Uthman, as well as bringing forward the formation of the new government.

SECTION FOUR

It Consists Of Six Chapters:

Chapter One
Imam 'Ali (As) After The Death Of Uthman

Chapter Two
The Pledge-Breakers (Nakithin)

Chaptr Three
The Deviators From Truth (Qasitin)

Chapter Four
Those Who Have Left The Faith (Mariqin)

Chapter Five
'Ali, The Martyr Of Adytum

Chapter six
Imam 'Ali's (As) Educational Inheritance

CHAPTER ONE
IMAM ‘ALI (AS) AFTER THE DEATH OF UTHMAN

The Allegiance of the People to Imam (as)

After the death of Uthman, disturbances broke out everywhere in Al-Madinah. At this time the eyes of the people turned towards Imam ‘Ali (as) as they hoped for him to help them out and bring an end to the disturbances, which were being observed among them all. At that time, no one dared to come forward as the caliph because everyone was well aware of the difficulties faced by the caliphate in that particular time. Uthman was not given much time to think about the new caliph alike the two caliphs before him. The Muslims knew very well that the council, which was developed by Omar, was also not fair, except for one of the members of the council. However, the rest were not suitable for caliphate at all. It was a very crucial time, and there were many complexes in the government. The government was in a very dangerous position and the people were compelled to hand over the control of the government to one who was stronger in leadership, having the ability to make everything right and bringing peace among the people after a decline. Only a qualified leader could take the nation out of their problems and save them from destruction. And, of course, no one but Imam ‘Ali (as) had the necessary qualities for this position. He was the person holding the responsibility of leadership for the nation of Muhammad.

A large number of the Muslims came to Imam ‘Ali (as) insisting that he take up the leadership. They were persistent in their request and hoped to convince him to take control of the government as the next caliph. Imam ‘Ali (as), however, showed no sign of interest in the caliphate and behaved coldly towards them. This was because he had already been deprived of his right for three times and now, when almost everything had been destroyed and an overwhelming number of problems and difficulties surrounded the Muslims and the

caliphate, people had come to Imam 'Ali (as) imploring him for help and offering him the power of the government. Imam 'Ali (as) said to them: "I see there is no need that I become your ruler. I am with you and I am willing for whosoever you choose. Therefore, choose anyone."

And he said:

"Do not give leadership to me. I am better for you as a counsellor than as leader."

Then Imam 'Ali (as) made the future obvious for them. He said:

"O people! We are facing a matter which has (several) faces and colours, which neither hearts can stand nor intelligence can accept."[1]

When the people insisted on their request, Imam 'Ali (as) replied them:

"You should know that if I respond to you I would lead you as I know and would not care about whatever one may say or abuse. If you leave me then I am the same as you are. It is possible I would listen to and obey whomever you make in charge of your affairs. I am better for you as a counsellor than as chief."[2]

A group of people, who were pressurizing Imam 'Ali (as) to accept the caliphate, came near, surrounding him Imam 'Ali (as) explained this in the following manner:

"At that moment, nothing took me by surprise, but the crowd of people rushing to me. It advanced towards me from every side like the mane of a hyena so much so that Hassan and Hussain were getting crushed and both ends of my shoulder garment were torn. They collected around me like the herd of sheep and goats."[3]

Imam 'Ali (as) did not have the greed for power and rule. He just wanted to help the people and take them out of their problems and wished to free Islam from impurity and religious innovation. He

1. **Tarikh al-Tabari** 3: 450, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 3: 90.
2. **Tarikh al-Tabari** 3: 450, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 3: 190.
3. Ibid.

also wanted to defend Islam. Therefore, Imam ‘Ali (as) did not accept the responsibility of caliphate at that time, and postponed it till the next day, so that the people could gather in the mosque and swear their oath of allegiance to him in public. This act was to show that the method of Saqifah and the developing council was wrong, also giving the people another chance to go and think about their decision of making Imam ‘Ali (as) the new caliph. Imam ‘Ali (as) also wanted to test their feelings for his caliphate. The recommendation of the Prophet (sawas) about Imam ‘Ali (as) had already been rejected by the caliphs before the Imam (as). Therefore, Imam ‘Ali (as) said:

"I swear by God that I accepted the seat of caliphate because I was afraid that someone from Bani Umayah – who is unaware of God's laws – would occupy the caliphate and would make the Book of Allah a toy in their hands."[1]

The chances of influence of the Bani Umayah in governmental centres and their lust for power, was something that made Imam ‘Ali (as) afraid, because he knew that the people had not enough religious knowledge.

The next morning a large number of people came to Imam ‘Ali (as) and escorted him to the mosque. Imam ‘Ali (as) went onto the pulpit and addressed them saying:

"O people, caliphate belongs to you. Except the person whom you will choose, no one has the right of your caliphate. Till yesterday there was a separation between you and me, and I was not willing to take the control of the government as well as your leadership, but you insisted that I should accept it. Beware that I will not spend even one Dirham without your permission. Now I will accept the caliphate, if you want. Otherwise, give it to someone else and I will not bring any excuses for it."

The crowd of the people shouted together: We have faith in you and we will now swear our allegiance to you with the condition

1. **Hayat al-Imam al-Hussain**, Baqir sharif al-Qarashi, **Ansab al-Ashraf for Bilathari** 2: 855.

that you will act according to the Book of Allah. Imam 'Ali (as) said: *"O Lord! Be the Witness."*

The people like waves started moving here and there to swear their allegiance to Imam 'Ali (as). Talha was the first person who, with his paralyzed hand, swore his allegiance to Imam 'Ali (as) but soon broke his it. Zubair followed him. And then the people of different cities, the people of Badr, the Migrants, Ansars and the rest of the people swore their allegiance to Imam 'Ali (as).

The allegiance to Imam 'Ali (as) was the first free act from the people which they were deprived of during selection of the first two caliphs. They were very happy, because a just government was established and the friend of deprived and oppressed people was made the caliph. The people were so happy when they came to know that Imam 'Ali (as) had accepted the post of caliphate. Imam 'Ali (as) mentioned this happening in the following words: "The happiness of people on their allegiance to me was so manifested that small children felt joyful, the old staggered (up to me) for it, the sick too reached for it helter skelter and young girls ran for it without veils."[1]

Refusal from Allegiance

It has been witnessed so many times that bad and evil people always stand against good people; the reason behind their disagreement with the good side is hidden in their revengefulness and jealousy. Although, according to Prophetic Hadiths, 'Ali was the only legal caliph and successor after the Prophet (sawas), as well as the Islamic history also insisted that after the demise of the Prophet (sawas), Imam 'Ali (as) was the greatest defender of the Muslim Ummah and the prophetic mission, because he had qualities which no one else did. On the other hand, the people themselves came to Imam 'Ali (as) and asked him to accept the post of caliphate. Somehow, there was a group who was afraid of Imam 'Ali (as) and did not come to swear allegiance to him.

The refusal of these groups from Imam 'Ali's (as) allegiance was against the demand of all the people which was equal to a

1. **Nahj al-Balaghah** 2: 222; **Bihar ul-Anwar** 51: 32 H 35

battlefield against them. This group after refusal of allegiance to Imam ‘Ali (as) continued their struggle for creating disturbances and with this, another era of disturbances began. Some of the people who did not swear their allegiance to Imam ‘Ali (as) were Sa'ad bin Abi Waqas, Abdullah bin Omar, Ka'b bin Malik, Muslima bin Mukhlad, Abu Saeed Khudri, Muhammadbin Muslima, Noman bin Bashir, Rafeh bin Khudaij, Abdullah bin Salam, Qudama bin Mathoon, Usama bin Zaid, Mughaira bin Sha'ba, Suhaib bin Sinan andbin AbuSufyan.[1]

However, some of these people became ashamed of not swearing their allegiance to Imam (as), but Imam ‘Ali (as) did not punish them and allowed them do whatever they wanted. There was no difference between them and the rest of the people. They were also given the same rights which the rest of the people were being given.

The Difficulties of Imam’s (as) Government

Imam ‘Ali (as) had become caliph after a 25 year solitude during which he was kept away from government and politics. It was a time when both the government and the Ummah had deviated from the right path because of the government of the three caliphs before Imam ‘Ali (as). This deviation played a vital role in weakening Imam’s (as) position against the incidents occurring in his time, because, before Imam’s (as) caliphate, the people had always seen him as a person who was under-the-thumb. So now it was very hard for them to accept Imam ‘Ali (as) as their ruler. Before Imam’s (as) caliphate, people had observed how Imam ‘Ali (as) was oppressed by undeserving rulers. Another reason behind doing this was the lust for kingship in the hearts of some of the Muslims. For example, we see that in Saqifah, Zubair was in favour of Imam’s (as) caliphate against Abu Bakr and others and he tried to defend his position, but then he himself wanted to snatch the caliphate from Imam ‘Ali (as) and become the caliph himself. On the other hand, Mu’awiyah - who not only was a freed slave himself but also his father - had also changed into a very powerful opponent against Imam ‘Ali (as) and was struggling to

1. **Tarikh al-Tabari** 3: 452, **al-Kamil fi’l-Tarikh** 3: 191-192.

take control of the Muslims from the Imam's (as) hands, and for this he kept threatening the government about Imam 'Ali (as).

Most of the people who stood against Imam 'Ali (as) were those who had been in the company of the Prophet (sawas), which created a big hurdle for the Imam (as) on his way to caliphate, because a large number of the common people were betrayed by their wealth and status as they thought they were right and Imam 'Ali (as) was wrong. This created a number of complexities in Imam 'Ali's (as) government and hampered its progress.

Another reason for which Imam 'Ali (as) took the control of Islamic Ummah was that in the time of Abu Bakr, the borders of Islamic countries had not exceeded the Arabian peninsula and Iraq, but in the time of Imam 'Ali (as) it had reached to North Africa and Central Asia. The groups of people, other than Arabs, who had just accepted Islam, had started their lives as Muslims under the dominance of a government that did not belong to an infallible caliph (in the time of Omar). It would be better to say that they had started their journey as Muslims under the directorship of a deviated government. Now it was the responsibility of the government of Imam 'Ali (as) to train them within no time as well as help them face their inner conflicts and difficulties. Indeed, Imam 'Ali (as) had to bring some very crucial changes during his rule, such as:

Removing the system of classification and categorization

The system of classification was established by the caliphs before the Imam's (as) rule. For this Imam 'Ali (as) had to take some important steps like:

A. Make the people follow the Sunnah of the Prophet (sawas) and let us not forget that the caliphs before Imam 'Ali (as) had completely neglected it. Also, Imam 'Ali (as) had to remove the classification among the Muslims in distribution of the treasure house. Imam 'Ali (as) explained about the distribution of the treasure house, according to the laws of Allah (swt) who had said in His holy Book"O mankind! Indeed we created you from a male and a female, and made you nations and tribes that you may identify yourselves with one another. Indeed the noblest of you in

the sight of Allah (swt), is the most God wary among you. Indeed Allah is all-knowing, all-aware." Imam ‘Ali (as) said: *"Beware, he who accepts the call of Allah (swt) and His Messenger and becomes Muslim; and enters our religion; and offers his prayer facing our Qiblah, will benefit from Islamic rights. You are the servants of God and the property belongs to Allah, so it will be distributed equally among you. No one is superior to others. Pious people have the best rewards and recompense in the presence of Allah."*[1]

B. Imam ‘Ali (as) had to take back those properties which had been unfairly distributed by Uthman. He also declared that all those properties which were unlawfully given during the time of Uthman should be returned to the treasure house. The people who were present in the court of Uthman had gathered a great amount of wealth for themselves, or Uthman had given these properties to turn their opinions in his own favour. Therefore, Imam ‘Ali (as) said: *"Beware, everything granted by Uthman should be returned to the treasury, because right is not nullified by any means. By Allah, even if I had found that by such money, women have been married or slave-maids have been purchased, I would have resumed it, because there is a wide scope in the dispensation of justice, and he who finds it hard to act justly should find it harder to deal with injustice."*[2]

This kind of economical politics was unbearable for the Quraysh. That is why a large number of the people of Quraysh, such as Marwan bin Hakam, Talha and Zubair, whom in their own view had excellent personalities, took a stand against Imam ‘Ali (as). They were all very worried about the decisions which Imam ‘Ali (as) made and when they were sure enough that Imam ‘Ali (as) would take their unlawful properties back, they struggled to create disturbances. It was to such an extent that Talha and Zubair came to Imam ‘Ali (as) and criticizing the Imam’s (as) government said: We are from amongst the relatives of the Prophet (sawas) and have taken part in Jihad, but you have paid us the same amount which

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1. Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 1: 269; al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 32: 16.
2. **Sharh al-Akbar**….

you have paid the rest of the people. Abu Bakr and Omar did not know us equal to the rest of the people and gave us priority over them."

Imam 'Ali (as) replied: "This is the Book of Allah. Take it. Read it and find your amount of rights in it and I will pay you according to this Book. "

They said: We have taken part in Jihad.

Imam 'Ali (as) replied: Does your experience related to Jihad exceed mine?

They said: No, but we are the relatives of the Prophet (sawas).

Imam 'Ali (as) said: Are you nearer to the Prophet (sawas) than me?

They replied: No, but we are the men of Jihad and battle.

Imam 'Ali (as) asked: More than me?

They replied: No.

Imam 'Ali (as) then said: I swear by Allah! There is no difference between my share from the treasure house and the share of my slave.[1]

C. Equality in theCommands of Allah: Imam 'Ali (as) was not negligent about how the caliphs before him applied the Islamic laws. When the caliphs did not know how to solve a problem, Imam would resolve the matter in the best possible manner. As soon as he took the control of the government, he presented the people with the perfect justice. He manifested the justice of Allah and with the help of Islamic power, he developed a government based on freedom, safety and justice.

Imam 'Ali's (as) life was full of such examples. He did not fear giving decisions against himself, his family (as) and his friends. Once armour was lost which belonged to a Jew. The owner of the armour complained against Imam 'Ali (as) and Imam 'Ali (as) went with him

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1. Al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 32: 110. Qutb al-Din al-Rawandi, **al-Khara'ij wa'l-Jara'ih** 1:187.

to the judge so that the judge could give his decision about the matter.[1]

The decisions which Imam ‘Ali (as) made about any problem had their roots in the deep religious and scientific knowledge of this great person.

Re-centralization the Government and arranging organizations

Imam ‘Ali dismissed Uthman's officials and appointed new and suitable persons, who were believed in by the common people, for their posts. He appointed Uthman bin Hunaif al Ansari to Basra and dismissed the ex governor Abdullah bin Amir al basri. The governor of Kufah Abu Musa Ash'ari was replaced with Amara bin Shahab; Ubaidullah bin Abbas was made the governor of Yemen and he was replaced with Ya’ali bin Manbeh; Qais bin Sa'ad bin Ubadah was given the post of Abdullah bin Sa'ad who was the governor of Egypt; moreover, the governor of Damascus, was replaced with Sahl bin Hunaif. These replacements were done because of official corruption and bad manners of the mentioned above governors, who were all appointed by Uthman. Ya’ali bin Manbah was the wealth minister of Yemen, who stole almost everything in it.Bin Abu Sufyancreated disturbances in military management, so that he could stop Sahl bin Hunaif from performing his responsibilities in an organised manner. [2]

Imam ‘Ali (as) acted very thoughtfully about choosing new rulers based on reality. He insisted on making the Islamic Principles practical in all fields, with a new official system. Imam gave good posts to the Ansars and was able to get their favor, while enhancing their confidence. He did not accept the deviating solutions. He didn’t even use its half. Imam ‘Ali (as) was well determined in the removal of corruption. Someone suggested to Imam ‘Ali (as) that he should not dismiss, unless his government was settled, but Imam ‘Ali (as) did not follow the suggestion.

When Mu’awiyah refused to swear his allegiance to the Imam, Imam ‘Ali (as) decided to bring Damascus under the rule of central

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1. Al- Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 41: 56-57, Ibn Shahr'ashub, **Manaqib** 2: 121-122. Ibn Kathir, **al-Bidayah wa’l-Nihayah** 8:5, **Kanz al-'Amal** 7:24.
2. **Tarikh al-Tabari**…

government. Therefore, he gave the flag of battle to his son, Muhammad bin Hanafiyah. He chose Abdullah bin Abbas as the commander of one group who moved on the right side of the main force and Omar bin Abi Salma the commander for the second group moving on the left side. Then he called Abu Laila bin Omar bin Jarrah and made him the commander of the central force. Then Imam 'Ali (as) delivered a sermon in which he encouraged the people of Al-Madinah for battle. Suddenly, the news of refusal of Talha and Zubair reached to Imam 'Ali (as) and he was informed that these two people were moving to Basra. This compelled Imam 'Ali (as) to change his mind and therefore, he did not send his forces. Talha and Zubair had asked Imam 'Ali (as) for permission to make the pilgrimage of Hajj. Imam had given them permission and warned them from breaching their promise and the allegiance to him.[1]

The Axes of Imam's (as) Works

In the Islamic Religion a person who cares about the deeds to be performed according to Islamic laws and their continuity against the problems coming into being after the demise of the Prophet (sawas), is given much importance. It has been clearly mentioned that such a person was 'Ali, followed by his sons (as).

Keeping an eye on everything as well the religious leadership demanded that the Infallible Imam 'Ali (as) took the highest posts, but after the demise of the Prophet (sawas), some incompetent persons, throughout the long period after the Prophet's (sawas) demise had managed to infiltrate and control some crucial posts of the government. However, these conditions could not stop Imam 'Ali (as) from playing out his role. It is natural that a person facing chaos and disturbances should have different roles in different times. Therefore, Imam 'Ali (as) based his works on two important axes in the way of bringing the deviated nation back onto the right path, while providing safety for their faith and beliefs:

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1. **Al-Fitnah wa Waqat al-Jamal**: 107-108, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 3: 203-205.

The First Axis, The Political field:His main struggle was to strengthen the government and to rule the Ummah leading the people towards perfection and heavenly goals. These goals are the compulsory tasks designed by Allah the Almighty to be met by mankind. Imam ‘Ali (as) started his struggle on this axis right after the demise of the Prophet (sawas). In regards to this, he said:

"If people had not come to me, and supporters had not exhausted the argument and if there had been no pledge of Allah with the learned to the effect that they should not acquiesce in the gluttony of the oppressor and the hunger of the oppressed, I would have cast the rope of Caliphate on its own shoulders."[1]

Imam ‘Ali (as) tried to unite the Muslims. For this he struggled very hard, but due to some hurdles in his way, he could not succeed, obstacles such as:

1. The Islamic Ummah did not know about what happened on that Thursday when Prophet Mohammad (sawas) passed away and the political conspiracy of Saqifah and some great realities which remained unknown for a great number of people.

2. The people did not have the power to analyze the responsibility of the Infallible Imam (as). They thought Imam ‘Ali (as) was struggling to take control of government for personal reasons. But the reality was something else. The reason behind Imam’s (as) stand against the rulers was that Imam ‘Ali (as) was completely aware of the Islamic school of laws and he had the ability to lead the society on the right path with sincerity, so that the society would be run according to the laws of Allah the almighty. Actually, Imam ‘Ali (as) wanted to remove the deviations which had come into being and lead the society on the right path. He wanted to devote everything he had, even his personal rights for the people. Therefore, according to Imam (as), the real apostleship was possible only if it were based on Divine justice. Allah the Almighty has said: "Recognize the truth and you will recognize the

1. Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah1**: 36-37, al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 29: 499-500.

truth-seeking ones."[1] The holy Prophet (sawas) also has said: "'Ali is always with truth and the truth is moving on the axis of 'Ali's essence."[2]

The Imam combined theory and practice very widely on every level. He trained his companions in a manner that they always took the side of Divine targets. His friends were not from amongst those who changed their minds every now and then, according to every new government. That is why we see that when he was offered the caliphate with the condition of acting according to the caliphs before him, he refused the proposal, because he knew that acting according to the caliphs before him was harmful for the society.

3. The ignorance of the people was another main reason which stopped Imam 'Ali (as) from being progressive, because not much time had passed since the time of ignorance and the people did not know the depth of the prophetic mission, neither were they were completely aware of the personality of the Prophet (sawas) as well as the role of Imam 'Ali (as). When the Prophet (sawas) nominated 'Ali as his successor, they thought it was nothing else but nomination of a person from the Prophet's family for his succession, so that the Prophet (sawas) could keep alive the greatness that he had gained; as was very common among the rulers before the Prophet (sawas) as well as after him.

4. The role of the hypocrites and their greed for declining the level of social peace and prosperity, made them create a tribal revengefulness among the Muslims and attempt to influence in government. It was easier for them to influence a government whose ruler was weak and deviated.

5. Those who wanted the leadership, because of their psychological and spiritual illnesses – felt very weak against Imam 'Ali (as) because Imam 'Ali (as) was able to give a very strong stand against them with several abilities such as truthfulness, jihad

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1. **Al-Tibyan** al-Tuwsi 1: 190, **Majm'a al-Bayan** al-Tabrisi 1: 187, al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 40: 126, **Tafsi al-Qurtubi** 1: 340, **Tafsir al-Bahir al-Muhit** 8: 123.
2. **Amali al-saduq**: 150, **Al-Manaqiub al-Kufi** 1: 493, **Sharh al-Akhbar** 2:60.

and explicit accent (which has also been mentioned in Mu'awiyah's letter to Muhammad bin Abi Bakr).[1]

The Second Axis, the Social field: When Imam 'Ali (as) was unsuccessful in achieving his goals by working on the first axis, he used the other way. Imam started strengthening the people against a complete decline and encouraged them to tolerate the difficulties which were created by an incompetent group. Imam 'Ali (as) told them not to leave the right path against the hurdle, which was being created for them, to make them deviate from the true path by the mentioned group.

For this Imam 'Ali (as) tried to spread the Divine mission intellectually, spiritually and politically among the people and make them aware of the reality of Islam by different ways, such as:

1. Imam 'Ali (as) interfered in those matters of the caliphs, which were difficult for them to solve and helped them make right judgments. Imam 'Ali (as) would do so to stop the nation of Muhammad from destruction. Therefore, one can say that the role of Imam 'Ali (as) was actually of a Divine inspector who had to interfere in the matters to stop the deviations.

That is why we see that when the heads of the government could not answer the questions of those who did not believe in the prophetic mission, Imam 'Ali (as) would interfere and solve the problems. He also advised and guided the caliphs in military and economical issues. He, on many occasions, advised the caliphs and helped them in making the right decisions and judgments.

2. Imam 'Ali (as) would guide the caliphs by giving them advice to lead his politics in the right direction; he also stopped the caliphs from making the religion deviant. This method became more and more manifest in the time of Uthman who did not listen to Imam's (as) advice at all.

3. Imam 'Ali (as) provided the nation with the most distinguished Islamic role model and a real Islamic government. This reality was

1. **Waqat Safin**: 119, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah**, 3: 189.

obviously seen during Imam's (as) ruling period. That is why Imam 'Ali (as) accepted the government – which he never accepted before – and played the role of a political and just leader. He, during his rule, presented a great human example, which was trained by the Islamic school of law. For the prophetic mission, Imam 'Ali (as) was looking for a suitable symbol able to be followed and a chain of thinking, free from every kind of mistakes.

4. Imam 'Ali (as) tried to train and prepare a group of suitable Muslims so that they could be helpful to him in his mission to make the things right. Imam 'Ali (as) started his activities, meant to lead the thoughts and ideas of the Muslims towards perfection and strengthening, as well as enhance the number of such Muslims; so that the history be led on the right path and the next generations could base their deeds on the Islamic laws.[1]

5. The great Imam 'Ali (as) revived the traditions of the Prophet (sawas). He also made the people aware of them and ordered them to collect the traditions. Imam 'Ali (as) gave much importance to the holy Book of Allah, its recitation, memorizing, explaining and interpreting the holy Qur'an and collecting its verses. According to Imam (as), the holy Book of Allah and the traditions of His Messenger were the pillars of the religion. And it was a must that the Muslims should know the reality of the Qur'an as well as the traditions of the Prophet (sawas) in the most correct manner, which was ordered by Allah the Almighty.

Islamic Culture during the Caliphs' Caliphate

One of the most important problems of religion is the existence of weak and disqualified people who do not have the power to understand good and bad and who come take the charge of government to defend the religion or carry out its rules. When these people are asked about their knowledge of prophetic viewpoints, they keep silence or explain it differently which not only makes the people doubt about their religious knowledge but

1. **Ahl al-Bait tanawa'a Adwar wa wihdat hadaf**, Sayid Mohammad Baqir al-Sadr: 59-69.

also doubt about how the prophetic mission could be useful in their lives.

On the other hand, we can see that the Prophet (sawas) explained every problem related to human life. After the demise of the Prophet (sawas), the same thing was observed in Imam ‘Ali’s (as) life during the caliphate of the three caliphs before him. Imam ‘Ali (as) would make their weaknesses manifested for the people. When ‘Ali (as) himself came to power, he gave everyone a freehand to ask religious questions so that their answers could be given.

When the rulers came to know about their weaknesses related to science and knowledge, they used every possible means to remove the label of infamy from their lives:

1. They banned the traditions of the Prophet and did not allow them to be spread and provide the people with scientific guidance and lead them towards positivism in their lives. Moreover, according to the traditions of the Prophet (sawas) only the members of holy Household (as) were the real caliphs after him. This is when we come to know about the secret of Omar's slogan in which he said "The Book of Allah is enough for us." During his last days of illness, when the Prophet (sawas) asked for a pen and a paper to prevent his nation from going astray, Omar did not provide him with it.[1]

Apparently, the phenomenon of prevention of the Prophet's (sawas) tradition had started long before this date i.e. when Abdullah bin ’Amr bin Aas was ordered not to write the traditions of the Prophet (sawas) anymore, because those in power ordered to burn down the books containing the traditions of the Prophet (sawas).[2]

2. The phenomenon of prohibition of asking questions about ambiguous verses of the holy Qur'an meant nothing but to keep the Muslims deprived of the power of research and learning of the Book of Allah. They separated the Prophet (sawas) 's Sunnah from

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1. **Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal** 2: 162, **Sunan Al-Darami** 1: 125, **sunan Ibn Dawud** 2: 176, **al-Hakim al-Nayshaburi**, al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn 1: 106. **Tafsir ibn Kathir** 4: 264.
2. Ibn Sa’d, **al-Tabaqat al-Kubra** 5: 188, **Siar a'alam al-Nubalaa** 5:59.

the verses of the holy Qur'an and ordered to consider only in Qur'an. It was on an extent that Omar ordered his employees: "Only use Qur'an and utilize the traditions of the Prophet (sawas) as less as possible. In this case, I am also with you.[1]" He also punished those people who asked questions related to interpretation of the holy Book of Allah.

3. The explicit wording of the Prophet (sawas) was replaced with innovation. Abu Bakr, instead of reasoning from the verses of the Holy Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet (sawas), used his own judgments in some issues. He looted the Prophet (sawas)'s property and did not pay the Khums to the members of the Household (as). On another occasion, he burnt down Fuja'a Sulaimi which was something new in Islam. Also, on the issue of "Kulalah" and inheritance of grandmother decided wilfully. Omar bin Khitab also, on the contrary to the Messenger of Allah (swt), distributed the treasure house among the people unequally. He also included his own ideas and decisions in some other religious matters such as contemporary marriage and "Hajje Tamattu" the rules regarding which already had been mentioned in "al-Nas wal-Ijtihad". Uthman bin Affan also rendered null the rule of retaliation for Ubaydullah bin Omar. Also he gave his own decision about some very clear rules, contrary to the Prophet (sawas). And we have already seen that the result behind people's attack and murdering Uthman bin Affan were nothing but these religious innovations.

These and other issues caused many difficulties for the Islamic government which can be mentioned as the real cause for the deviation of prophetic mission from its right path. As a result, a great number of people were misled. Imam 'Ali (as) said in this regard:

"The bases of the occurrence of evils are those desires which are acted upon and the orders that are innovated. They are against the Book of Allah. People co-operate with each other about them even though it is against the religion of Allah. If wrong had been pure and unmixed, it would not be hidden from those who are in search of it.

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1. Ibn Sa'd, **al-Tabaqat al-Kubra** 6: 7. al-Hakim al-Nayshaburi, **al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn** 1: 102.

And if right had been pure without admixture of wrong, those who bear hatred towards it would have been silenced. What is, however, done is that something is taken from here and something from there and the two are mixed! At this stage, Satan overpowers his friends and they alone escape for whom virtue has been apportioned by Allah from before."[1]

Imam's (as) Struggle for the Revival of the Religion

Imam ‘Ali (as) was completely aware of his responsibilities after the demise of the Prophet (sawas), which, according to him, was to save the holy Religion of Islam from deviation and consider the issues of Islamic government, so that the Islamic government would be able to remain on the right path. During the caliphate of the three caliphs before him, he put all his efforts into effect for this purpose. He tolerated the oppressions which were exerted against him and neglected his rights for the betterment of his nation. However, as soon as he became the caliph, he took some very important actions for the revival of the Prophet's (sawas) Sunnah and also invited people to come under the shelter of the Sunnah. He especially considered the holy Book of Allah and its interpretation, training the nation and removing corruption from all points of the Islamic country. Some of the most important actions taken by Imam ‘Ali (as) in this regard can be summarized as the following:

1. In spite of showing any kind of doubt against revengeful enemies and opponents, Imam ‘Ali (as) started a session of question and answer about the holy Book of Allah, the Sunnah of His Prophet (sawas) and issues related to Islam.

2. Imam ‘Ali (as) followed the tradition of the Prophet (sawas) and, therefore, had great respect for the readers of the Qur'an and gave them high posts and ranks. The holy Book was recited and the people were taught how to recite it. Moreover, they were taught the sciences related to it, they were told how to act upon the Qur'an and they were taught other religious matters during recitation of

1. **Nahj ul-Balaghah**…

the holy Qur'an.[1]

3. Imam 'Ali (as) paid much attention to those who, because they were not Arab or who had some other problems of pronunciation, could not recite the holy Qur'an in the proper manner. The Commander of the faithful, consequently, introduced syntax to keep the Arabic language safe from being pronounced incorrectly.[2]

4. The Commander of the faithful invited the people to collect the traditions of the Prophet (sawas) and encouraged them for discussions related to the traditions.[3] He always used to say: "Halter knowledge and the sciences by having it written." He also ordered research into the branches of knowledge which were related to the Sunnah. He said: "Discuss the traditions with each other and do not leave them, or else they would vanish and be destroyed."[4]

5. Imam 'Ali(as) always depended on the Qur'an and Sunnah for explanation of rules and lawmaking; and he never benefited from other sources such as personal approbation and analogy which were not known as legal sources for the explanation of Divine laws; however, he completely nullified them.

The great Imam 'Ali (as) revived the conduct of the Prophet (sawas), related to worshipping and ethics; and gave an end to religious innovations which had been done by the three caliphs before him.

6. Imam 'Ali (as) was successful in finding some suitable faithful men who were able to help him in Islamic leadership and defence.

Imam 'Ali (as) ordered by the Prophet (sawas), started his activities on the same direction from the time of the holy Prophet (sawas). Therefore, we can see that the Prophet (sawas) would give charge of those people who were inclined to Islamic knowledge

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1. **Al-Taghib**
2. **Al-Aghani** 12: 13, **Wafiat al-A'ayan** 2: 216, Ibn Kathir, **al-Bidayah wa'l-Nihayah** 8: 312
3. Al-Tuwsi **al-Thaqib fi al-Manaqib**: 178, Ibn Sa'd, **al-Tabaqat al-Kubra** 6:186.
4. **Kanz Al-'Amal** 10: 304.

and ordered Imam ‘Ali (as) to take care of them. The Prophet (sawas) encouraged them to follow their master. And we know that a group named Shiites was formed in the time of the Prophet (sawas) which consisted of people such as: Ammar Yasir, Salman Farsi, AbutharGhaffari, Jabir bin Abdullah Ansari, Miqdad bin Aswad, Abdullah bin Abbas and others. These great personalities always took ‘Ali’s (as) sidev even in the most difficult times which the Islamic government faced after the demise of the Prophet (sawas).

When Imam ‘Ali took charge of the Islamic government as caliph, a number of faithful and brave people were with him. Imam ‘Ali (as) paid much attention to them and trained them on the basis of Islam and taught them the different branches of science as well as made them aware about different angles of life. These great personalities fulfilled their responsibilities in helping the Islamic mission and defending the religion of Allah from deviation and destruction. The position of these personalities was very clearly based on bravery and rightfulness against refractory people and against those who had snatched the rights of the Muslims. Among these people were Malik Ashtar, Kumail bin Ziyad Nakha'i, Muhammadbin Abu Bakr, Hujr bin Uddi bin Hamq Khuza'i, Sa'sa'a bin Soohan Abdi, Rushaid Hajari, Hashim Marqal, Qanbar, Sahl bin Hunaif and a number of other partisans.

CHAPTER TWO
IMAM ‘ALI AND THE SEDITIOUS (PLEDGE-BREAKERS)

The Insubordinate

The news of swearing the oath of allegiance by the common people to the Commander of the faithful ‘Ali made the people of Quraysh and those who were against Islam, very angry. To them, this news was nothing but a thunderstorm which shocked their minds and bodies. Actually, ‘Ali's government was equal to the Prophet's government to them which was destined on its way to remove all sorts of oppression, enmity and refractoriness and in return bring justice, equality, supremacy and dominance to the people. This government also caused serious damage to the economical basis, which was, till then, based on usury and hoarding. Whenever a person from amongst Uthman rulers were guided by Imam ‘Ali (as), the people of Quraysh felt intense jealousy to think themselves equal to other common people who had come to power and had been provided with governmental posts by the Imam (as).

When Talha and Zubair were made nominees of the caliphate by Umar, they also began thinking of themselves as qualified and even better than the Commander of the faithful. They wanted to rule a great part of the Islamic World. 'Aaisha was also given much importance and respect during the ruling periods of Abu Bakr, Omar and Uthman, but now she had come to know that in the government of Imam ‘Ali (as) – whose government was based on the basis of the Book of Allah and Sunnah of the Prophet – she had almost lost her respect and rank in the government.

Mu’awiyah, the only one ruling in Damascus, also dreamt about ruling the Islamic World. He wanted to take complete control of the Muslims, but when Imam ‘Ali (as) was suddenly selected as caliph and he made his own programs to bring about great improvements to the nation, it shocked everyone. Moreover, all the people who were enjoying great ranks and posts during Uthman's

caliphate lost their posts as well as wealth during the caliphate of ‘Ali. The presence of Imam ‘Ali (as), as a ruler, was a serious threat for those who were walking on the path of reverting to the deviated tribal control and ruling. Imam ‘Ali (as) was well aware that he was able to raise the flag of a real Islam without fear of anyone. This is why he always unveiled the reality and deviation of the people of his time.

Therefore, the abovementioned people decided for sedition so that they could stop the newly established government of Imam ‘Ali (as) from becoming established. Certainly Imam ‘Ali (as)was well-aware of the political situation and the presence of the opponents of the Islamic movement, because the holy Prophet (sawas) had already informed him about some groups who in the future were to take a stand against the Imam’s (as) government. Also, the Prophet (sawas) ordered Imam ‘Ali (as) to fight against them. He mentioned the groups under the title of Nakithin (Pledge-Breakers), Qasitin (Deviators from Truth) and Mariqin (Those Who Have Left the Faith).[1]

The Disobedience of 'Aaisha

The position of 'Aaisha against Imam ‘Ali (as) was something very strange and contradictory to the position of someone who had gained the pride to be the wife of the Prophet (sawas). She used to say about Uthman "kill this foolish old person" and in this way motivated the people against Uthman and towards his murder.[2] When the rebels surrounded Uthman's house in Bahbooheh, 'Aaisha left Al-Madinah for Makkah and was waiting for Uthman to soon be killed. She was hoping for Talha's caliphate and wanted him to take control of the Muslims as the next caliph. However, although after coming to know that following Uthman's death, the people had sworn their oath of allegiance to ‘Ali and had made him

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1. **Amali al-Saduq**: 464, Al-Kufi, **Manaqib al-Imam Amir al-Mu'minin** 1:355, al-Hakim al-Nayshaburi, **al-Mustadrak ‘ala al-Sahihayn** 3: 131. al-Salihi al-Shami, **Subul al-Huda wa’l-Rashad** 10: 150.
2. Al-Kufi **Kitab al-Futoh**, 2:421, Al-Irbali, **Kashf al-Ghummah** 1: 239, Ibn Qutaybah, **al-Imamah wa’l-Siyasah** 1: 72, Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 6: 215, **al-sira al-Halabiah** 3:356.

the new caliph, she had decided to return to Al-Madinah, but she did not do so and continued her journey to Makkah. She pretended to be mournful regarding Uthman's death and asked for vengeance for his bloodshed. When she was asked, "You motivated the people for the killing of Uthman," she replied: "The people first asked him for repentance and after he repented, they killed him," as if she was present at the time of Uthman's murder.

'Aaisha with the help of her wording, which she used to motivate her followers for battle, declared to fight against Imam ‘Ali (as). She tried to enhance his force against him. She also attempted to betray the other wives of the Prophet (sawas) and compel them to join her in the battle against the Commander of the faithful, but they did not reply to her.

Umm Salamah tried to stop 'Aaisha from opening a battlefield against Imam ‘Ali (as) as well as the action of disobedience, by giving her advice to keep the nation away from bloodshed and difficulties. She said to 'Aaisha: O 'Aaisha you were someone who instigated the people against Uthman and used the ugliest words for him till yesterday declaring him a foolish old person. On the other hand, you are well aware about the position of ‘Ali near the Prophet (sawas). Do you still want me to remind you?

Umm Salamah added: Do you remember, one day Imam ‘Ali (as) went to the Prophet (sawas) whilst you and I were in the presence of the Prophet (sawas). When the Prophet (sawas) came down from the left side of Fudaid, he said something to ‘Ali in secret. Their discussion continued for a long time. You were worried about them and wanted to complain against them. I gave youadvice but you did not listen to me and complained. But you soon came back weeping. When I asked you the reason for your crying you said: I complained against them as to why they were talking so quietly. You said: I said to ‘Ali:O, son of Abu Talib, I take my chance to be with the Prophet every nine days, but you do not leave us alone on this day either. The holy Prophet, whose face was becoming red because of anger, looked at me and said: "[O 'Aaisha!] Go back or I swear by Allah that whosoever makes him (Imam ‘Ali (as)) angry does not have faith in Allah, no matter whether he belongs to my

family or the common people" and then you were sorry about what you had done and came back.

'Aaisha replied: Yes, I do remember.

Umm Salama asked: Then why do you want to revolt against him?

'Aaisha said: I want to bring some improvements among the people and for this I am hopeful for Allah's reward.

Umm Salamah said: If this is what you want to do, then do whatever you want.

And 'Aaisha came out from Umme Salalma's home.[1]

It has been narrated: The wives of the Prophet accompanied 'Aaisha till the region of "Zaaq Irq". It seems as if they had come with 'Aaisha to convince her to return to Al-Madinah and in this way stop the disturbance and sedition from spreading. However, they could not be successful and wept for the future of Islam. The people who were with them also started crying and that particular day was named "the day of mourning and weeping".[2]

Mu'awiyah's Deception and Breaching of Promise by Talha and Zubair

Mu'awiyah ruled Damascus and he had many facilities, which he could use in any way according to his own wish. He did not have any problem with the people of Damascus, because they knew only the family of Abu Sufyan as their rulers from the very time they accepted Islam. These rulers were sent to them by the caliphs. Before Mu'awiyah, his brother Yazid was the ruler of Damascus. On the other hand, Damascus was situated very far from the capital of Islamic government (where the caliphs lived) and this was also another factor which played a vital role in the power and strength of this particular place. Mu'awiyah started his political activities related to enlarging the domain of disturbances, which was created as a result of Uthman's murder among the Muslims. The reason behind his activities was to achieve his personal benefits.

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1. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 6:217-218, al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 32: 169-170.
2. Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 3: 209, **Tarikh al-Tabari** 3: 478.

Therefore, he addressed Talha and Zubair in a special manner which was enough to create in their hearts greed and hope for rule and for this, they had to fight Imam ‘Ali (as). In this way a disturbance was created in the central part of the Islamic government. Afterwards, Mu’awiyah wrote a letter to Zubair: It is from Mu’awiyah bin AbuSufyanto the servant of God, Zubair – commander of the faithful. Peace be upon you. Afterwards, I have sworn allegiance from the people of Damascus for you. They have accepted my offer and are now completely under control like the herd of sheep which has been brought to the market for sale. Rescue the people of Basra and Kufah and let the son of Abu Talib not take the lead. After taking allegiance of these two cities, there remains no other important place. After you, I have taken the allegiance of the people for Talha bin Abdullah. Raise the problem of vengeance for bloodshed of Uthman and call the people towards this issue. You should try your best in this regard. May God make you successful and you enemies contemptible![1]

When Zubair received the letter of Mu’awiyah, he became very happy. He believed in what was said by Mu’awiyah. Therefore, he and Talha agreed to breach their promise to Imam ‘Ali (as) and took a stand against him. They regretted their allegiance, which they had sworn to Imam ‘Ali (as) and always said: We swore our oath of allegiance to ‘Ali in unwillingness.

As soon as they heard about 'Aaisha's call in which she invited the people to fight against Imam ‘Ali (as), they tried to reach her by any means.

It has been narrated: They came to Imam ‘Ali (as) and asked him to give them a suitable post in the government. But when Imam ‘Ali (as) refused their request, they decided to join 'Aaisha's side. Therefore, they came to Imam ‘Ali (as) for the second time and asked for his permission saying that they are going on Umrah (the smaller pilgrimage to Makkah, one performed on any occasion except on the appointed day). Imam ‘Ali (as) said to them: Yes, I swear by God that you are not going for Umrah, but you are going

1. Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 1: 231.

to achieve your goal. It has been narrated that Imam ‘Ali (as) said to them: You have decided to commit treason.[1]

They, who had turned from allegiance supporting Imam ‘Ali (as) and who were against each other in the time of Uthman, went to 'Aaisha's home and became united with each other. In this meeting, it was said that Talha, Zubair and Marwan bin Hakam will gather the people on the name of vengeance for bloodshed of Uthman and will make them ready for a battle against the Imam (as); and for this they were told to raise Uthman's clothing as a sign of rebellion against Imam ‘Ali (as). They were told to introduce Imam ‘Ali (as) as the one responsible for the bloodshed of Uthman saying that he had not punished those who were involved in Uthman's murder but had provided them shelter. Therefore, they decided to start their march to Basra and occupy the city and then change it into the centre for their military activities. Damascus was under control of Mu’awiyah and al-Madinah was going through a serious disturbance.

'Aaisha's Marching towards Basra

On the other hand, 'Aaisha along with a huge number of people who had revengefulness in their hearts towardsImam ‘Ali (as) and had agreed for the worldly life and government, started her march towards Basra to start a face toface battle against Imam ‘Ali (as). Imam ‘Ali (as) was the legal caliph of the Muslims at that time. Yali bin Manbeh who was dismissed from the post of directorship of Yemen by Imam ‘Ali (as), provided 'Aaisha's force with swords and camels which he had stolen from Yemen when he was the governor. On the other hand, Abdullah bin Aamir also supplied them a great amount of wealth which he had stolen from Basra. They chose a camel for 'Aaisha which was called "'askar". The people of Bani Umayah had surrounded the camel while 'Aaisha was moving ahead of them towards Basra. Before moving to Basra, she wrote some letters to the heads of that place in which she

1. Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 1: 231, Ibn Qutaybah, **al-Imamah wa’l-Siyasah** 70-71.

pretended to take Uthman's revenge and had told them to withdraw their allegiance to ‘Ali.[1]

The signs of betrayal started to be manifested from the heads of the government of ‘Ali. When they gone out of Makkah and when it was time for Zuhr prayers, Marwan bin Hakam called the Azan in order to create a disturbance between Talha and Zubair – in case of success for benefiting from their enmity – he went to them and said: Which of you two should I pay my regards to as commander of the faithful and say Azan for prayer? The partisans of both sides shouted for their own leader. However, when 'Aaisha saw the situation, she felt that there may be a hustle and bustle between the two parties. Therefore, she sent someone to her nephew (sister's child) Abdullah bin Zubair and asked him for congregational prayer.

When Aaisah's forces reached "Autas", Sa'eed bin Aas and Mughairah bin Shu'beh met them. When Sa'eed was informed that 'Aaisha was about to fight against Imam ‘Ali (as) with the pretension of vengeance for Uthman's bloodshed, he smiled and said to her: O mother of the faithful! I see that Uthman's murderers are also accompanying you!It has been narrated that Sa'eed bin Aas said to Talha, Zubair and 'Aaisha: Where are you going? You are going to ask for vengeance of Uthman's bloodshed from someone who is standing behind you (and who is also from your side)?By this he wanted to point at ‘Ali who was in Al-Madinah.

Eventually, the forces of Jamal reached "Haw'ab". When the dogs of that place saw the forces, they started barking at them. 'Aaisha was afraid of their barking. She said to Muhammad bin Talha: Which place is this? He replied: O mother of the faithful! This place is called Haw'ab. 'Aaisha cried and said: I must return to Al-Madinah.

Muhammad bin Talha asked: Why?

She said: I heard the Prophet of God saying to his wives: "As if I am seeing one of you at Haw'ab while the dogs are barking at you." Then he said to me: O Humaira! Let it not be you!

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1. Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi’l-Tarikh** 3:210, **Tarikh Tabari** 3: 469-471.

After saying this, 'Aaisha stopped and lowered her camel. She said: take me back to Makkah. I swear by God that the woman about whom the Prophet of Allah was saying is me. In this way, her partisans also lowered their camels around 'Aaisha's camel for a day and a night. Abdullah bin Zubair came to her. He swore by Allah the Almighty and said that the place they were standing at was not Haw'ab. He had brought a number of Bedouins, too, whom he had given money or betrayed another way. They also confirmed Abdullah's wording. It is said that the confirmation of these people is known as the first forged witness in Islam.[1]

Battles in Outskirts of Basra

When the forces of Jamal reached near Basra, Uthman bin Hunaif who was appointed as the governorof Basra by Imam ‘Ali (as) informed the people of Basra about the forces which were coming towards them for a battle. He requested the people of Basra to be calm and not let there be any disturbance. He also clearly mentioned the wrong and illegal position of the Jamal forces to them. The faithful people of Basra who had a great belief in Imam ‘Ali (as), showed their preparation for a war against the forces of Jamal for defending the truth and the Divine Religion (Islam) as well as to stopping the forces of Jamal to attack Basra.[2]

Uthman bin Hunaif who had very good Islamic manners and who was a true follower of his commander Imam ‘Ali (as), tried to stop 'Aaisha and her partisans from rebellion and refractoriness so that there may not be a battle between them. Therefore, he sent Imran bin Haseen and Abu Aswad Dueeli towards them, so that they could talk to 'Aaisha and her partisans and convince them to change their minds about battle. But these two people were not successful and 'Aaisha along with Talha and Zubair kept insisting on their declaration of war against Imam ‘Ali (as).

'Aaisha and her partisans reached another place named "Marbad". They entered from its upper part. Uthman bin Hunaif and a group

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1. Ibn Qutaib, Ibn Qutaybah, **al-Imamah wa’l-Siyasah** 1:82, Al-Masoudi, **Murooj al-Dahab** 2: 357-358.
2. Ibn Qutaib, Ibn Qutaybah, **al-Imamah wa’l-Siyasah** 1:38, Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi’l-Tarikh** 7:259, Ibn Kathir, **al-Bidayah wa’l-Nihayah** 7:259.

of people moved towards them. Talha, Zubair and 'Aaisha were provoking the people to withdraw from Imam 'Ali's (as) allegiance by addressing them about vengeance of Uthman's bloodshed. At last they were successful to create a disturbance among the people. As a result, two groups of the people came into being: one favouring 'Aaisha and her partisans and the other one opposing them.

Jariyah bin Qudama Sa'adi came to 'Aaisha and wanted to tell her to change her mind about her battle intention against Imam 'Ali (as). For this purpose, he used the method of advice. He addressed her saying: "O mother of the faithful! I swear by God that Uthman's murder is not so important that you should sit on this cursed camel, leave your house and be ready to face swords. You were respected for you were the wife of the Prophet of Allah (sawas) but alas you lost your respect.[Be careful that] for he who thinks it fair and legal to fight against you, killing you is also legal. So if you have stepped into this battle by your own wish, just return to you house; and if you have been compelled for it, ask the people for help."[1]

Battle, Ceasefire, Treachery

With 'Aaisha's arrival in Basra, the people of Basra were divided into many groups and there was a great hustle and bustle among them; some of them complained against this military expedition, some others confirmed its legality; another group legalized it while the fourth group denied its legality. When the situation became crucial, people went to war against each other. They fought each other near the borders of the city, but when night fell, they gave an end to their fight. Uthman bin Hunaif was not only in favour of bloodshed, but also had inclination to peace and tranquillity. He was waiting for the Imam's (as) arrival in Basra. When both of the sides became tired of fighting, they declared the state of peace and tranquillity and an agreement for ceasefire was signed between them. They decided to send a messenger to Al-Madinah and ask the people of Al-Madinah for a solution. If Talha and Zubair swore

1. **Tarikh Tabari** 3: 482, Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 3: 213, **Fitnah waqat al-Jamal**: 127-129.

their allegiance, Uthman bin Hunaif would leave Basra. Otherwise, he would remain and Talha and Zubair would leave the ground.

Ka'ab bin Masoor – the messenger of both parties – returned from Al-Madinah and said that Usama bin Zaid has claimed that Talha and Zubair had swore their allegiance to Imam ‘Ali (as) with unwillingness. However, the people of Al-Madinah did not agree with Usama's viewpoint in this regard. The commanders of 'Aaisha's force took this message as a document and attacked the commanding house of Uthman bin Hunaif at night. They killed Uthman's partisans and shaved the hairs of his head, face and eyebrows. However, they were afraid of killing him, because his brother Sahl bin Hunaif was the governor of Al-Madinah.

Imam ‘Ali’s (as) March and the End of Refractoriness[1]

When Imam ‘Ali (as) took charge of the government, the declaration of Mu’awiyah – in which he had refused to swear his oath of allegiance to Imam ‘Ali (as) – was a serious threat and hurdle for the peace and tranquillity of the people as well as the newly established central government. Therefore, Imam ‘Ali (as) prepared military equipment and necessary political conditions, so that he could stop the possible bloodshed and dispersion of the Muslims.

But as soon as Imam ‘Ali (as) was informed about 'Aaisha's march towards Basra along with Talha and Zubair and when he came to know about their disobedience, he postponed the plan of attacking Damascus and taking it back from the hands of Mu’awiyah and marched towards Makkah accompanied by a force based on the heads of migrants and Ansars.

When Imam ‘Ali (as) reached "Rabaza", he sent many letters to all the cities and asked them for help. In these letters, Imam ‘Ali (as) also explained the crucial situation to them, so that by this act, the disturbance could be stopped before spreading too much. Therefore, he sent Muhammad bin Abi Bakr and Muhammad bin Ja’afar to Kufah, but, Abu Musa Ash'ari did not

1. Ibn Qutaib, Ibn Qutaybah, **al-Imamah wa’l-Siyasah**: 74, **Tarikh Tabari** 5: 507.

reply to Imam’s (as) message, rather he discouraged the people from joining Imam ‘Ali’s (as) force and taking part in battle against 'Aaisha and her partisans. Then, Imam ‘Ali (as) sent Abdullah bin Abbas to him. He also failed to convince Abu Musa Ash'ari not to discourage people from helping Imam ‘Ali (as). After him, Imam ‘Ali (as) sent his son Imam Hassan Mujtaba and Ammar Yasir and then Malik Ashtar to that place. This group dismissed Abu Musa from his post. In this way, the people of Kufah became united and prepared themselves for helping the Commander of faith. They left their city and joined Imam ‘Ali (as) in the region of "Zee Qaar".

When Imam ‘Ali (as) was on his journey, he was not slow at following up important cases. Therefore, he did not neglect Talha and Zubair and wrote a letter to them, hoping that they would come to know about their revolt and disturbance and would stop the action that would make the Muslims suffer from difficulties and bloodshed. That is why he sent some people, such as Zaid bin Sohan, Abdullah bin Abbas, along with others near 'Aaisha. This group talked to them and tried to convince them with logic and reasoning. Their reasoning was to such an extent that 'Aaisha said to Ibn Abbas: I cannot bear ‘Ali's reasoning.

Ibn Abbas said to her: If you cannot tolerate the reasoning of a creature of Allah, how can you stand the reasoning of the Creator?[1]

The Last Advice

When Imam reached the gates of Basra, he started writing more and more letters to Talha and Zubair. In these letters, he stopped them from revolt and disturbance. 'Aaisha and her partisans were afraid that her commanders and the great number of people who had accompanied her may be influenced and impressed by ‘Ali's reasoning. Therefore, they left the city with the intention of fighting ‘Ali's troops. When both sides were face to face, Imam ‘Ali (as) ordered the herald to go towards his forces and declare that:

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1. Al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 32: 122, Ibn Shahr'ashub, **Manaqib** 3: 180-181.

"No one is authorized to throw an arrow towards the enemies; or throw stones to them; or fight them with spears unless I go and talk to them and give them the last ultimatum."[1]

When Imam met them, he saw nothing but their insistence on war. Then Imam ‘Ali (as) went to Talha and Zubair and the three of them stopped between the two troops. Imam ‘Ali (as) said to them: "You two have prepared weapons and forces riding as well as on foot. If you have any reason for it, fear God; and do not be like that old woman who opens her twisted thread before its firmness. Am I not your religious brother? You had declared to protect my bloodshed and I had declared to protect yours. So what happened that you think my bloodshed permissible?"

Then Imam ‘Ali (as) said to Talha: "You have brought the wife of the Prophet to fight from her side while you have hidden your own wife in your house? Did you not swear your oath of allegiance to me?"

Then he said to Zubair: "We thought of you as a member of the family of Bani Hashim, unless your ill-natured son was brought up and caused separation between us."

Imam ‘Ali (as) added: "O Zubair! Do you remember the day when I was with the Prophet with the Bani Ghanam tribe? The Prophet glanced upon me and smiled and so did I. You said to the Prophet (sawas): "The son of Abu Talib is exhibiting self-praise." But the Prophet (sawas) replied: "He is not a self-praising person. One day, you will fight against him snatching his right."[2]

Zubair replied: Yes, I remember that.

It has been narrated: Zubair left the battlefield. When the battle began, he was killed somewhere far from the battlefield, while Marwan bin Hakam killed Talha on the battlefield.[3]

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1. Ibn Qutaib, Ibn Qutaybah, **al-Imamah wa’l-Siyasah** 1: 91, Al-Masoudi, **Murooj al-Dahab** 2: 365.
2. Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi’l-Tarikh** 3:239, Ibn Kathir, **al-Bidayah wa’l-Nihayah** 7: 268.
3. Ibn Qutaib, Ibn Qutaybah, **al-Imamah wa’l-Siyasah** 1: 92-93, **Tarikh Tabari** 3: 539-540.

The Occurrence of War

Till the very beginning of the battle, Imam 'Ali (as) was hopeful to be successful to stop those guilty of prejudice from their refractoriness. That is why despite insistence of his commanders on starting the battle, he did not allowed anyone from his side to start it, but rather said to his partisans:

No one is authorized to throw an arrow towards the enemies; or throw stones atthem; or fight them with spear unless I give you the permission of war or when they have started it.[1]

The forces of Jamal started the war with throwing arrows towards the troops of Imam 'Ali (as) which martyred one of his partisans. After him, a second and third person from Imam's (as) side were martyred. This was when, Imam 'Ali (as) commanded his forces to reply to them and defend with justice.

The two troops grappled with each other. Heads were being severed and hands were being cut from the bodies. Both sides were badly injured. Imam 'Ali (as) was looking at the battlefield when he saw that some people were badly defending a camel on which 'Aaisha was sitting. Seeing this, Imam shouted: Go after the camel as it is the devil.

Imam 'Ali (as) and his partisans attacked the enemies and reached the camel. They killed it. When the opponent troops saw Imam 'Ali (as) and his partisans, they escaped from the battlefield. The Commander of the faithful ordered to burn the camel and let the winds spread its ashes so that a particle of it would not remain to betray the simple-minded people. After that Imam 'Ali (as) said: *"O Lord! Curse this animal because it resembles to the cow of Bani Israail."*

Then Imam 'Ali (as) glanced at the ashes of the camel which were being taken here and there by wind, and recited the following verse of the holy Qur'an:

"Now look at your god to whom you went on clinging. We will burn it down and then scatter it[s ashes] into the sea."

1- Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 9: 111, **Tarikh al-Y'aqubi** 2: 183, Al-Masoudi, **Murooj al-Dahab** 2: 362.

Imam's (as) Operation after the War

Allah the Almighty granted ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful with a victory over his enemies and the war finished. The herald of Imam ‘Ali (as) shouted among the people giving them the news of a general forgiveness. He said: Beware, no one is allowed to kill an injured and wounded person, nor he is allowed to chase those who have escaped the battlefield. No one is allowed to pierce a spear into the body of those who have turned their backs to him. He, who puts his weapons on the ground, is in peace. He who goes into his house and shuts the door is also forgiven. No one is allowed to take anything other than the weapons of the troops of Jamal which have been left behind at the battlefield. Everything other than the weapons belongs to the heirs of those killed in the battle.[1]

Imam ‘Ali (as) ordered Muhammad bin Abi Bakr and Ammar Yasir to drag 'Aaisha's mule-litter to a safe corner from amongst those who had been killed in the battle. Muhammad bin Abi Bakr and Ammar bin Yasir had to take the responsibility of what was related to his sister. Towards the end of that night, 'Aaisha was brought to Basra where she was kept in the house of Abdullah bin Khalaf Khuzaa'i.[2]

Imam ‘Ali (as) walked in the battlefield among those who were killed in the battle and spoke to everyone calling his name. He repeatedly said:

"I found correct what my Lord has promised for. Did you also find the words of your gods true?"

Then Imam ‘Ali (as) added:

"Today I will not punish anyone who leaves the idea to fight against us. However, those who are about to fight us again shall be punished."

Imam stayed in the outskirts of Basra and did not go into the city. He commanded the people to take their killed relatives with them

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1. **Tarikh Tabari** 3: 538, **Al-kamil fi al-Tarikh** 3: 255.
2. Al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 32:208, Sheikh Al-Mufid, **Kitab al-Irshad** 1: 255-256.

and bury them. The people came out of the city and buried their relatives who were killed in the battle.[1]

Then Imam ‘Ali (as) stepped into the city of Basra. He went to the mosque and offered the prayers there. Then he addressed the people. He reminded them of their breach of promise. They asked for the Imam’s (as) forgiveness. Imam ‘Ali (as) said to them:

"I have forgiven you, but be careful not to create disturbances anymore. You were the first people who broke their promise and caused disturbances among the nation making them dispersed."

Then the throng of the people along with their leaders met Imam ‘Ali (as) and swore their oath of allegiance to him.

Then the Commander of the faithful entered the treasure house of Basra. When he found a great amount of wealth there, he said: "Betray anyone else." Imam ‘Ali (as) ordered for equal distribution of the treasury house among the people. Every person got five hundreds Dirham. Imam ‘Ali (as) also got the same amount of share. When the distribution ceremony was over, there remained nothing in the treasure house. A person who had not taken part in the battle came from nowhere and asked for his share. Imam ‘Ali (as) gave him his own share and in this way, there was left nothing for the Imam (as).

After that the Commander of the faithful ordered that the necessary equipment for 'Aaisha's journey to Al-Madinah be provided, so that she could be sent back to Al-Madinah, for she was the wife of the Prophet. His brother and a number of women who were dressed in the men's clothing, having swords in their hands and turbans on their heads were also told to accompany 'Aaisha respectfully to Al-Madinah. 'Aaisha was not optimistic towards Imam ‘Ali (as). She thought that Imam ‘Ali (as) had not respected her. But when she heard that Imam ‘Ali (as) had appointed some women to accompany her to Al-Madinah, she felt ashamed of what she had been thinking about Imam ‘Ali (as). She was also ashamed of her

1. Al-Masoudi, **Murooj al-Dahab** 2:271, Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 1: 249-250.

defeat and the disturbance which she had caused among the people against Imam ‘Ali (as) and then she started weeping and crying.[1]

The Outcomes of the Battle of Jamal

The battle of Jamal had many negative effects on the Islamic society, such as:

1. The issue of Uthman's murder was so well-spread that it turned into an important political matter which caused great theoretical and practical hurdles in the way of the Islamic society. On the other hand, Mu’awiyah bin Abu Sufyan was waiting for a suitable chance so that he could benefit from the deviation of the battle of Jamal.

2. The Muslims became revengeful against each other which was the reason for many battles and bloodshed among them. Dispersion was created among the people of Basra and the citizens of the other Islamic cities. Some people started their efforts for vengeance of the bloodshed of their sons from others although the Muslims were compelled to kill their sons in the battlefield.

3. The level of inner deviation of Islamic society as well as obstructions against Imam ‘Ali’s (as) government increased. Mu’awiyah’s refusal for swearing his oath of allegiance to Imam ‘Ali (as) opened another line of battle for Imam ‘Ali (as) which limited the outer enhancements and developments as well as the amendments, which were necessary for advancement of the Islamic society.

4. The revengefulness of the people against each other provided political opponents with the opportunity to use weapons and start battles and wars for their personal interests.

Kufah the Centre of Caliphate

After the situation was completely under control, Imam ‘Ali (as) left for Kufah to use it as the base for his further movements. Before moving towards that land, Imam sent some letters to the

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1. Ibn Qutaib, Ibn Qutaybah, **al-Imamah wa’l-Siyasah** 1:98, Al-Masoudi, **Murooj al-Dahab** 2: 370.

people living there. In these letters, Imam had explained the incidentsfor them in brief. Imam appointed Abdullah bin Abbas as the governor of Basra so that he could meet the people and explain to them the reasons behind their battle.[1]

Choosing Kufah as the new capital of Islamic government had some reasons such as:

1. Enhancement of Islamic world's domain; it was necessary that the capital and the political adjustments of the government should be in position to control every corner of the Islamic World and freely do whatever was necessary.

2. Most of the people who helped Imam 'Ali (as) with their swords in order to remove the revolt and disturbance of the partisans of Jamal were prominent and great personalities of Kufah.

3. The political and rebelling conditions that came into being after Uthman's murder compelled Imam 'Ali (as) to remain in Kufah and brought peace and tranquillity to the region.

1. **Tarikh Tabari** 3: 545, **Fitnah waqat al- Jamal**: 128.

CHAPTER THREE
WITH DEVIATORS FROM TRUTH (QASITIN)

Mu'awiyah's Preparation to fight 'Ali (as)

Mu'awiyah was very afraid to see how Imam 'Ali's (as) government was established in Kufah and how he had started working on the plans for uniting members of the government creating an Islamic civilization based on the holy Book of Qur'an and Sunnah. Therefore, he rapidly made plans and started working on them. He asked the cunning 'Amr bin 'Aas for help. They became united in their mission that was to show their enmity against Islam and Imam 'Ali (as). When 'Amr bin 'Aas received Mu'awiyah's letter, he quickly agreed to compromise his religion – which could take him to the paradise – in favour of his greedy desires.

When 'Amr bin 'Aas arrived in Damascus, he started crying like a woman.[1] He did this to mislead the people. After the plans based on tricks and fraud, which were made between Mu'awiyah and 'Amr, they did business between them in which it was said that after having Imam 'Ali (as) defeated, the government of Egypt be given to 'Amr. Mu'awiyah signed an agreement on this with him, then Mu'awiyah and 'Amr set and made plans against Imam 'Ali (as). To make their hostile planning – which was also based on treachery – successful, they agreed with each other. To achieve their goals, they had no other way but to fight Imam 'Ali (as) who was the legal heir of the Prophet and the standard-bearer of truth and justice. The two hypocrites came to one point at last which was to mislead the ignorant people by using the slogan of Uthman's clothing. This was the only way they could motivate the people against Imam 'Ali (as). Therefore, when Noman bin Bashir came into the city, people started crying and mourning. Their

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1. Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 3: 274.

mourning was to such an extent that it created in them revengefulness against Imam 'Ali (as) and they forgot the true guidance.[1]

To motivate the people of Damascus against Imam 'Ali (as) and to ask them for backing, Mu'awiyah prepared themselves for battle;'Amr suggested that Sharahbeel bin Samat Kindi should be appointed as the first person motivating the people in their benefit. 'Amr was well aware of Sharhabeel's piety and high ranking against the tribes of Damascus. On the other hand, he also knew that Sharhabeel was not happy with "Jareer" – who was sent by Imam 'Ali (as). Sharhabeel was a person who did not investigate much to know what was right and what was wrong. Therefore, they betrayed them very easily. And in this way, Sharhabeel started his activities. He asked Mu'awiyah to take a stand for the vengeance of Uthman bin Affan's murder. On the other hand, he started collecting and convincing the people for a battle against Imam 'Ali (as).[2]

Controlling the Euphrate River

After having the people prepared for war, Mu'awiyah asked for their allegiance. Then he wrote a letter to Imam 'Ali (as) in which he declared war against him[3]. He gave the letter to Jareer and asked him to take it to Imam (as). The letter reached the Imam's (as) hands a bit late. After sending the letter, Mu'awiyah along with his troops quickly moved towards Siffin so as to occupy the altitudes of Furat. He wanted to stop Imam's (as) march and to stop them from reaching water, preventing them from having a single drop. Mu'awiyah thought it was the first step to his victory against Imam (as). Imam 'Ali (as) reached the land of Siffin very late, so he asked Mu'awiyah to allow Imam's (as) forces to benefit from the water of Furat, but Mu'awiyah and his troops did not accept the Imam's (as) request. The thirst was badly harming the Iraqi forces and so Imam 'Ali (as) came under pressure from his troops, who were insisting to break the blockade. He therefore

1. **Tarikh Tabari** 3: 560, Ibn 'Asakir, **Tarikh Madinat Dimashq** 59: 117
2. Ibn Muzahim, **Waq'at Safin**: 44-47.
3. Ibid, 56.

gave his troops permission to attack on the banks of Furat. They attacked and successfully pushed the troops of Mu'awiyah back from the shore of Furat. However, Imam 'Ali (as) did not behave badly towards the troops of Damascus as they did to him. He allowed them to benefit from the water without any hurdles.[1]

A Peaceful Effort

Despite Imam's (as) letters to Mu'awiyah, in which he asked him to join his side and to swear his allegiance to the caliph, Mu'awiyah continued to respond negatively, insisting on waging a battle and war against him by any possible means. Still, when Imam 'Ali (as) and his troops became successful to take the control of the shores of Furat, a ceasefire and peace was observed for sometime in the land. Imam 'Ali (as) hoped for another peaceful effort, and so when there was a ceasefire, Imam 'Ali (as) sent Basheer bin Mahseen Ansari, Saeed bin Qais Hamdaani and Shabas bin Rabi'ee Tameemi towards Mu'awiyah as his representatives and said to them: "Go to this person –Mu'awiyah – and call him towards Allah, to obey Him and tell him to join the rest of the majority of Muslims." But Mu'awiyah's answer was only sword and battle. He said to the representatives of 'Ali: "Get out of my sight. There is no other judge between me and you but the sword."[2]

Battle after Truce

For a number of times, the two opposing troops fought each other, although it was not too severe or dangerous at that time. The two sides once again came face to face and the battle started between them. When the month of Moharram of 37th years of Hijrah arrived, there was an agreement of peace signed between the parties. With this agreement, Imam 'Ali (as) wanted to bring peace and tranquillity between the troops and his suggestions were based on peace, tranquillity, unity and the prevention of bloodshed.

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1. Ibn Muzahim **Waq'at Safin** 161-163, Al-Masoudi, **Murooj al-Dahab** 2:375-377, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 3:312.
2. Ibn Muzahim, **Waq'at Safin** 187-188, Ibn A'atham **Kitab al-Fotouh** 3:20-21.

Mu'awiyah's suggestions to the people of Damascus, in comparison, were rejecting Imam's (as) allegiance and vengeance for Uthman bin Affan's murder.[1]

The truce lasted one month. Both sides became tired of continuously fighting. Imam 'Ali (as) commanded his troops to be prepared and Mu'awiyah did the same. At last the two troops started a deadly battle against each other and Imam 'Ali (as) continuously said to his troops:

"Do not attack the enemies first. Thank God for you are right. In case of battle and victory against them, do not kill the escapees; do not kill the injured and wounded ones either. Do not strip the enemies; and refrain from humiliating punishment."[2]

In this way, the battle continued and a large number of the Muslims lost their lives. The number of wounded and injured persons exceeded ten thousand.

Martyrdom of Ammar bin Yasir

Ammar bin Yasir went upfront in the lines of the troops, and being an outspoken orator said: Today I am beholding those people who are fighting in such a manner that even those people who are not right also doubt them. I swear by Allah that if they defeat us and follow us till the palm groves of Hajar, even then we will be right and they will be wrong. He attacked the troops of Mu'awiyah while he was saying these epic verses: "Before now, we have fought against you for the descending of the holy Book and now we are going to fight you for its interpretation. I will hit you so hard that your heads would be thrown away from your bodies and the friends will forget their friends. Or I will bring back the truth on its right path."

Ammar attacked the opponent troops with the same courage with which he used to fight in the time of the Prophet (sawas). Many spears were pierced into his body. Abul Aa'diyah and Ibn Jaun Siksiki martyred him with their spears. It has been narrated that

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1. Ibn Muzahim, **Waq'at Safin** 196-202, **Tarikh Tabari** 3:570-571.
2. Ibn Muzahim **Waq'at Safin** 203-204, **Tarikh Tabari** 4:6, Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 3:293.

these two persons were arguing with each other about who will take the executed head of Ammar to Mu'awiyah. Abdullah bin 'Amr bin Aas was also present. When he saw their argument, he said: No matter which one of you takes his head to Mu'awiyah, because I have heard from the Prophet that he said: "O, Ammar! You would be martyred by a refractory group.[1]

On that day when Ammar left for the battlefield, Imam 'Ali (as) was so worried and anxious about him and every now and then asked where he was. When the news of his martyrdom was given to Imam (as), he became so sad and his eyes were filled with tears. He quickly went to the place where Ammar was martyred. Actually, Imam 'Ali (as) had lost a real helper and brother in the form of Ammar Yasir. Imam 'Ali (as) offered prayers on Ammar's dead body, and then buried him.

The news of Ammar's martyrdom spread between both the troops. Since the people knew the high rank of Ammar and had heard the Prophet's words about him, a controversy among the troops of Mu'awiyah developed. However, every simple person is easily betrayed. Mu'awiyah advertised that the real killer of Ammar was someone who had brought him to the battlefield (he wanted to blame Imam 'Ali (as) for Ammar's martyrdom) and simple-minded people believed his cunning words.[2]

It has been narrated that: When Imam 'Ali (as) heard of Mu'awiyah's words regarding Ammar's martyrdom, he said: If it is true, then I have martyred Hazrat Hamza, too, because we were the ones who brought him to the battle field of Uhud."[3]

The Trickery of lifting Qur'an on Spears

The battle lasted for some time. During this period the companions of Imam 'Ali (as) showed great tolerance on the way to victory.

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1. Ibn Muzahim **Waq'at Safin** 340-341-188, Ibn A'atham **Kitab al-Fotouh** 3: 158-159, al-Khawarizmi, **Manaqib**: 233, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 8: 24.
2. Ibn Muzahim **Waq'at Safin**: 342-343, **Tarikh Tabari** 4: 28-29.
3. Ibn 'Abd Rabbih al-Andalusi, **al-'Iqd al-Farid** 5: 90, **Tadhkirat al-Khawas** 1: 419.

Then Imam 'Ali (as) stood and addressed them with a sermon, in which he encouraged them for jihad and battle. He said: "O people! Your battle with your opponents has entered a level which you have seen with your own eyes. They are having their last attempts. When any incident occurs, its ending can be foretold from its beginning. The troops of the enemies fought against you without having any belief in religion and its principles. And now we are about to be victorious. Tomorrow, I will attack them and will bring them for a trial in the presence of Allah."[1]

When Mu'awiyah heard this news he became certain about the upcoming defeat of his troops. Therefore, he sent for 'Amr bin 'Aas and asked him for advice regarding the Imam's (as) attack. He said to 'Amr: "We have only tonight to find a solution for the matter. Tomorrow, 'Ali (as) is going to attack us and we will be defeated. What do you say?"

'Amr replied: In my opinion neither can your troops match 'Ali's troops, nor are you better than he is. He is fighting with a different goal to yours. You want to be alive while he prefers to be martyred. If you dominate the Iraqi forces, they will fear you, but if 'Ali becomes victorious, the people of Damascus will never be afraid of his oppression. Now tell them exactly what I say. If they accept it, a disagreement will come into being among them; and if they do not accept it, still there will be disagreement among them. Make the holy Qur'an a judge between you and them.[2]

Mu'awiyah immediately ordered to lift the Qur'an on the spears. His orders were acted upon and then the troops of Damascus said to the troops of Iraq: This is the Divine Book whose verses – from beginning till the end – are the judge between you and us. Who is the best person for defending the people of Damascus other than themselves; and no one is suitable for saving the people of Iraq but the Iraqis?

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1. **Kittab Salim bin Qis**: 335-336, Ibn Muzahim **Waq'at Safin**: 476, Ibn Qutaib, Ibn Qutaybah, **al-Imamah wa'l-Siyasah** 1:142.
2. Ibn Muzahim **Waq'at Safin** 476-477, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 2:210.

The misleading summon of Mu'awiyah's forces badly affected the forces of Imam 'Ali (as). They became enthusiastic and there started a great hustle and bustle among them. They said: "We accept the call towards judgment of the holy Book of Allah." Ash'as bin Qais who was one of the high-ranking commanders of Imam 'Ali (as) insisted on this matter more than rest of the people.

Imam 'Ali (as) said to them:

"O servants of God, keep the process of your rightfulness continued and keep attacking your enemies, because Mu'awiyah, 'Amr bin 'Aas, Ibn Abi Moait, Habib bin Abu Salama, Ibn Abi Sarah and Dhahak are not among the partisans of the religion or the holy Qur'an. I know them better than you do. I have been with them from the days of my childhood until I was grown-up. They were the worst children and the men of their times. Woe is to you! I swear by Allah, they have utilized this slogan to betray the people and discourage them. This is a true word which they are using for making their falsehood successful."

They addressed the Commander of faith by his name saying: "O 'Ali! Whenever you are called towards the Book of Allah the Exalted, accept it, otherwise we will give you to the enemies and we will do the same thing to you which we have done to the son of Affan before!"

Imam 'Ali (as) did not have other options but to accept the demands of these betrayed people. He said: "If you obey my orders, fight them; otherwise, do whatever you wish to."[1]

In that time Malik Ashtar was fighting very bravely and there was not much time and distance between him and Mu'awiyah, when these betrayed people said to the Commander of the faithful: "Send someone to Ashtar and call him back." However, Ashtar did not listen to them and continued his fight against Mu'awiyah, because he was well-aware that this was a false story. The troops of Imam 'Ali (as) threatened Malik saying that if he did not return, they would martyr Imam 'Ali (as). And then Ashtar left the battlefield

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1. Al-Masoudi, **Murooj al-Dahab** 2:390-391, **Tarikh Tabari** 4:34-35, Ibn al-Athir, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 3:316-317.

and returned. He condemned them for what they had done and said: "I swear by Allah that you have been betrayed and misled. You were told to stop fighting, and your answer was positive to it. O you with the callus foreheads, we thought that all your prayers were the result of indisposition to the world and the love for seeing God; but now I have come to know that you have escaped from death seeking for the shelter of the world."

The people replied to him: "The Commander of the faithful is willing to give an end to the battle." Imam 'Ali (as) was quiet and calm. He was sitting sadly; a great trick had influenced his army and had caused it to disobey their commander. Imam 'Ali (as) spoke because he could not do anything. He mentioned his condition saying:

"Till yesterday I was giving orders but today I am being given orders, and till yesterday I was dissuading people (from wrong acts) but today I am being dissuaded. You have now shown liking to live in this world, and it is not for me to bring you to what you dislike."[1]

Arbitration and Peaceful Agreement

The Imam's (as) difficulties did not end with the betrayal of his army. If the disobedient army would accept the representatives of Imam 'Ali (as) in the issue of arbitration, Imam 'Ali (as) still could gain a political plus point by means of discussion.

Therefore, Imam 'Ali (as) decided to appoint Abdullah bin Abbas or Malik Ashtar (whose sincerity was approved by the Imam (as) his representatives), but the betrayed group did not accept them and they insisted on nominating Abu Musa al-Ash'ari as their representative. Hence, Imam 'Ali (as) said:

"First you disobeyed me, and now you are disobeying my orders. I do not want to choose Abu Musa for this work, because I do not see him sincere. He left me and changed his way when I was walking towards the battle of Jamal. He escaped from my sight

1. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 2: 87.

until the past months, when I forgave him, and provided him with shelter."[1]

By dispersion of Imam's (as) army, Mu'awiyah and 'Amr bin 'Aas were successful in achieving their goals. To help them complete their mission, Ash'as bin Qais was cooperating with them from amongst the army of Imam (as).

'Amr bin Aas, without any protesting from the people of both sides, came forward as the representative of people of Damascus, to write the articles of the agreement along with Abu Musa Ash'ari. He refused to write the title of "the Commander of the faithful" for Imam 'Ali (as) in the contract. Imam said: "This day resembles much to the day ofHudaibiyah, when Suhail Bin 'Amr said to the Prophet (sawas): "You are not the messenger of Allah." He added: The Prophet of God (sawas) when he heard his words, looked at me and said: [O 'Ali!] One day you will also be under such conditions. On that day, you will accept it although you will have been oppressed."

The most important points of the agreement were declaration of ceasefire and end to war, the solution to the problems of both parties on the basis of the Book of Allah and the tradition of His Messenger (sawas). Nomination of two persons as the judges delayed till the month of Ramadan of 37th year of Hijrah, because the agreement was written in the month of Safar of the same year. It is very interesting that the issue of vengeance for Uthman's murder was not even pointed in the agreement, which provided the base for the revolt caused by Mu'awiyah and the sons of those partisans of him who were freed. Both the parties agreed to bring their arbitrators in "Damat al-Jandal".[2]

A Valued Positioning

It has been narrated that: Malik Ashtar was asked to write and confirm the agreement. He said: May my hands be paralyzed if I

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1. Ibn Muzahim **Waq'at Safin** 499, **Tarikh Tabari** 4:36, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 3:319.
2. Ibn Muzahim **Waq'at Safin**: 504-508, **Tarikh Tabari** 4:38-40, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 3:319-320.

write something on this agreement. Had I not had a clear sign from my God regarding my enemy? Were you not beholding the victory with your own eyes?

The Commander of the faithful was informed: Malik Ashtar neither wants to confirm the agreement nor does he wish to give an end to the battle. Imam (as): I swear by God that neither I agreed for this; and I want you not to be agreed, either.

Then he added: "I wish there were one or two persons among you like Malik Ashtar who would be able to look at the enemies from my perspective. In this case, I could easily tolerate you people; and I hoped that some of your deviations would be removed. I stopped you from going wrong, but you disobeyed me. I swear by God that you did commit a mistake which has weakened and destroyed your power and strength and brought for you weakness and meanness.[1]

Imam 'Ali's (as) Return and Withdrawal of Khawarij

Imam 'Ali (as) returned to Kufah with a heavy heart which was full of sorrows and grief, because he had seen how the falsehood of Mu'awiyah had strengthened and was about to become successful. On the other hand, he was looking at his own army who had been dispersed by their disobedience. They listened no more to the commands of their commander.

When the great Imam 'Ali (as) entered Kufah city, he found every one mourning and crying for those killed in the battle of Siffin. In the meantime, a group of about twenty thousand fighters did not enter Kufah city with the Imam (as), but they stayed in the region of "Harora". They chose Shabas bin Rab'ias their new commander and Abdullah bin Kawa Yashkari as the Imam for congregational prayers. They withdrew from their allegiance to Imam 'Ali (as) and wanted to form a new council among the Muslims. Their story began from the time of the contract, because they were not happy about some article of the contract and said: Arbitration belongs to Allah. Although they pressurized Imam 'Ali (as) to accept the

1. **Al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 3:322, Ibn Muzahim **Waq'at Safin** 521, **Tarikh Tabari** 4: 42-43.

agreement, they themselves chose the mentioned sentence as their slogan.

The Commander of the faithful tried to convince them by giving advice. Therefore, he sent Abdullah bin Abbas towards them and commanded him not to be too hasty in arguing with them. After Ibn Abbas, Imam ‘Ali (as) also went to meet them. He talked to them, rejecting all their reasonings. They accepted the Imam’s (as) invitation and returned to Kufah.[1]

The Meeting of Arbitrators

The time came for the meeting of the arbitrators. Imam ‘Ali (as) sent a group of four hundred people under supervision of Shuraih bin Hani. He also sent Abdullah bin Abbas with them as imam to lead the congregational prayers as well as keep an eye on their actions. Abu Musa Ash'ari was also accompanying them. Mu’awiyah also sent a group of four hundred people under supervision of ’Amr bin ‘Aas. The two groups met at "Domat al-Jandal".

A group of clear-sighted people from the Imam’s (as) group feared the tricks of ‘Amr bin Aas and so they met Abu Musa Ash'ari and gave him advice in order to make him understand that he had to make his decisions very carefully.[2]

The Result of Arbitration

Abu Musa Ash'ari and ’Amr bin Aas stood side by side. The first person (Abu Musa Ash'ari) was politically stupid with very weak faith. He was someone who did not believe in the guardianship of Imam ‘Ali (as). The second person (’Amr bin Aas) was very cunning, who wanted to keep the school of thought of Ahl al-Bayt (as) away from political grounds. ’Amr bin ‘Aas had agreed to cooperate with Mu’awiyah – who was the son and grandson of freed slaves – for his greed for governmental post and rank.

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1. **Al-Kamil fi’l-Tarikh** 3: 326-327, **Tarikh Tabari** 4: 53-54.
2. Ibn Muzahim **Waq'at Safin**: 534, Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah** 2:245.

This meeting did not last long. Since 'Amr bin 'Aas was well aware of the weaknesses of Ash'ari, therefore, he dominated Ash'ari within no time. He then changed the mind of Ash'ari according to his wishes. They went into the room and agreed on removing Imam 'Ali (as) as well as Mu'awiyah from government, choosing Abdullah bin Omar as the new caliph instead of them.

Ibn Abbas warned Abu Musa against cooperating with 'Amr bin 'Aas in his political game. Ibn Abbas said to him: Woe be to you! If you have agreed with 'Amr bin 'Aas on some points, I am sure he has betrayed you. Now, give 'Amr the first chance to speak, because he is a cunning person and I am not sure that he would act accordingly to the agreed points between you and him. Therefore, if you stand first and talk to the people, he will go against you.

Ash'ari stood and delivered a sermon in which he removed Imam 'Ali (as) from the post of caliphate. After him, 'Amr bin 'Aas stood and delivered his speech, in which he confirmed the removal of the Commander of faith and appointed Mu'awiyah -instead of 'Ali- as the new caliph.[1]

And with this trickery Mu'awiyah was victorious and he was appointed the new caliph. The people of Damascus showed their respect to him as their new commander of the faithful. However, Iraq fell into great trouble and realized their mistake. They believed that all their steps were misled and they had been defeated. Abu Musa Ash'ari escaped to Makkah, while Ibn Abbas and Shuraih bin Hani returned towards Imam 'Ali (as).

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1. **Ibn Muzahim Waq'at Safin**: 554-546, Al-Masoudi, **Murooj al-Dahab** 2:398-399, **Tarikh Tabari** 4: 51- 52.

CHAPTER FOUR
WITH THOSE WHO HAVE LEFT THE FAITH (MARIQIN)

We can say that the Khawarij came into being right after the separation of a number of the Imam's (as) troops from his army, after the bloody battles of Jamal and Siffin. Also their deviation can be understood as being a result of the caliphate's deviation from the right path – which is the path of the holy Infallibles (as). Among the most important characteristics of the Khawarij was that they were strictly literal, being possessed with superficial things, prejudice, coarseness and misjudgement between right and wrong. They were easily influenced and manipulated by propaganda, and on every single incident to doubt about any case.

It is considerable that the holy Prophet (sawas) had already foretold of their characteristics. There is a tradition in which the Prophet (sawas) has said:

*In this nation – the Prophet (sawas) did not say **from** this nation – there will be a group of people who will humiliate your prayers; they will recite the holy Qur'an only for recitation. These people will leave the religion of Allah with the same speed with which an arrow leaves the bow."*[1]

Imam 'Ali (as) could not be successful to remove this illness and deviation from the religion of Allah. In fact the battles and disobediences of Jamal and Siffin removed these illnesses and deviations within a very short period. The following reasons can be named as the real causes for the creation of Khawarij:

1. Inner defeat and losing hope of success. Imam's (as) battles were fought with Khawarij, those who had left the faith and were apparently Muslims. However, they did not have the ability of understanding Imam's (as) fight against rebellions. Therefore, they

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1. **Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal** 3:60, **Sahih Muslim** 3:112, **Sahih Bukari** 6:115, **Kanz al-'Ama** l11: 143.

did not accept the arbitration, although, they had themselves encouraged Imam ‘Ali (as) to accept arbitration. But they did not try to remove their mistakes regarding their positioning against Imam (as). They tried to blame another person for their mistakes who was no one other than Imam ‘Ali (as).[1]

2. They benefited from the freedom of thought, which was given to the people by Imam ‘Ali (as). It has been narrated: When Imam ‘Ali (as) was delivering his sermon, Khawarij complained against him saying that "Arbitration belongs to Allah". Imam ‘Ali (as) replied to them with the following sentences:

"You have three specialties. We will not stop you from offering your prayers in the mosques. As long as you remain united with us, you will be paid your salary from the treasure house. And we will not open the battlefield against you, unless you do."[2]

Imam ‘Ali (as) Rejecting the Outcome of the Arbitration

Imam (as) was very sad to know the result of the arbitration. He addressed the people and tried to encourage them for the rectification of their mistake. He reminded and advised them saying:

"The result of opposing the orders of a sincere, kind, knowledgeable and experienced advisor is nothing but regret, so now, certainly the disobedience of a sympathetic counsellor, who has knowledge as well as experience, brings about disappointment and results in repentance. I had given you my orders about this arbitration and put before you my hidden view, if Qasir's orders were fulfilled, but you rejected it (my orders), like rough opponents and disobedient insurgents, till the counselor himself fell in doubt about his counsel and the flint (of his wit) ceased to give flame. Consequently, mine and your position became as the poet of Hawazin says:I gave you my orders at Mun`araji'l-liwa but you did not see the good of my counsel till the noon of next day (when it was too late). Be careful that these two persons – Abu Musa Ash'ari and ‘Amr bin ‘Aas – whom you chose as arbitrators

1. **Tarikh Tabari** 4:53-58.
2. **Tarikh Tabari** 4:53-58, **al-Kamil fi’l-Tarikh** 3: 334-335.

neglected the orders of the holy Book of Allah and revived whatever was cancelled by the Qur'an. Each of them followed his desires and did not have divine guidance at all. They gave decisions without having any manifested reason from the holy Book or Sunnah, in which they disagreed with each other and none of them decided correctly. Allah, His Messenger (sawas) and the suitable faithful people loathed them. Now they are about to march towards Damascus and God willing they will enter your camps, too."

Imam wrote a letter to Abdullah bin Abbas and asked him to prepare the people of Basra, asking them to join Imam 'Ali's (as) army in a battle against Mu'awiyah. The people of Basra joined the people of Kufah, but the revolt and disturbance caused by Khawarij, consisting of groups of the people from Basra and Kufah and who were on their way to Nahrawan worried Imam's (as) partisans. The partisans of Imam 'Ali (as) were thinking that if they leave for Damascus, the presence of these people – the Khawarij – would be a problem for them. Therefore, they requested Imam 'Ali (as) to let them give an end to the Khawarij first.

A seditious action of Khawarij was that they first arrested Abdullah bin Khabbab and his wife and killed them both. They tore the stomach of his wife and removed his newly born child without any reason. Also they killed Harith bin Murreh Abdi who was sent to them by Imam 'Ali (as) as his representative.[1]

Battle with Khawarij

The army of Mariqin (those who have left the faith) came together near Nahrawan. Some groups from Basra and other places also joined them. Imam 'Ali (as) tried so many times to stop them from their thoughts, which were based on disobedience and want for war, but they showed no reaction other than disturbance, ignorance and a desire for battle. Therefore, the Commander of the faithful prepared his troops and before starting the battle, addressed them. Imam advised and commanded his forces to observe the Islamic

1. **Tarikh Tabari** 4: 57, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 3: 338.

ethics in every condition. When Imam 'Ali (as) reached near the troops of Khawarij, he once again sent someone towards them and asked them to hand over the killer of Abdullah bin Khabbab and Imam's (as) representative, Harith bin Murreh, but they refused Imam's (as) order saying: We all participated in killing them and we all believe in the permissibility of bloodshed of you and them.

Imam 'Ali (as) sent Qais bin Sa'ad and Abu Ayyub Ansari towards Khawarij so that they could advise them and make them understand the reality of the incident and stop them from bloodshed of the Muslims. Then, Imam 'Ali (as) himself addressed them and said:

"O you, whose enmity, obstinacy and hypocrisy have made them fight and who have been stopped from understanding the reality by their desires and who have been made greedy by their frivolousness, today you have met an unfavourable incident. I am warning you that you will be killed on the bend of this canal and on the level of this low area, while you will have no clear excuse before Allah, or any open authority with you."

Imam 'Ali (as) then expressed his unwillingness for the arbitration and his objection against it and them, even though they had compelled him towards accepting it. On the other hand, the two arbitrators had not made their decisions on the basis of the Qur'an and Sunnah. And now it was time for Imam 'Ali (as) to fight against Mu'awiyah and, therefore, the revolt of Mariqin was useless at this point. When they (Mariqin) heard the wordings of the Imam (as), they not only remained on their falsehood but also wanted Imam 'Ali (as) to confess to having become a disbeliever and then to declare his repentance. Imam 'Ali (as) said to them:

"Storm may overtake you while there may be none to prick you (for reforms). Shall I be witness to my becoming heretic after acceptance of faith and fighting in the company of the Prophet (sawas)?! "In that case I shall be misguided and I shall not be on the right path."

After saying these words, Imam left the Khawarij and they prepared themselves for battle against Imam (as). Imam 'Ali (as) also prepared his troops for a battle against them. For the last time,

Imam (as) attempted to keep them away from their decision, and in doing so, he ordered Abu Ayyub Ansari to raise the flag of peace and say to them:

"For he who comes under this flag is peace. Those who leave for Kufah and other cities will also be in peace. We do not want to attack you. What we want is that you should hand over us the killers of our brothers."

After hearing this, many groups from Khawarij changed their minds and left the ground. Imam ‘Ali (as) said to his partisans: *"Stop and do not attack them until they do."*

Khawarij attacked Imam’s (as) troops with the slogan of "Rulership belongs to Allah; March towards the paradise." It was not long before most of them lost their lives and a few persons, less than ten survived. Only less than ten people were martyred from Imam ‘Ali (as) the troops.[1]

After the battle, Imam ordered and insisted to search for "Zus Sadiyah" among the dead bodies. "Zus Sadiyah" was one of the leaders of Khawarij and according to the saying of the Prophet (sawas), if the dead body of "Zus Sadiyah" was found it was the symbol of faithlessness of his group. Imam ‘Ali was informed about the dead body of Zus Sadiyah which was found in the battlefield. When Imam ‘Ali (as) heard the news, he said:

"God is Great! Neither I have lied nor did the Prophet (sawas) lie to me. I am afraid you will leave your struggle, otherwise, I would explain to you what Allah the Exalted has said from the tongue of His Prophet (sawas), about the excellence of the troops who fight the Khawarij, with complete awareness and knowing our rights."

And then Imam bowed in the court of Allah.[2]

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1. **Tarikh Tabari** 4: 62-67, **al-Kamil fi’l-Tarikh**, 3: 343-348, Al-Masoudi, **Murooj al-Dahab**, 2: 405-406.
2. **Tarikh Tabari**, 4: 66, **Ibn Haban al-Thouqat**, 2: 296, **Jawahir al-Matalib fi Manaqib al-Imam Ali(as)**, 2: 76.

Invasion of Egypt

When Uthman bin Affan was murdered, Imam 'Ali (as) appointed Qais bin Sa'ad bin Ubadah as governor of Egypt. Then he replaced Muhammad bin Abi Bakr with him on the basis of his own reasoning. Egypt, as another part of Islamic government, disturbed Mu'awiyah a lot. After the mentioned battles and seeing the results of these quarrels, as soon as disturbances spread everywhere in Islamic Nation, Mu'awiyahand 'Amr bin 'Aas started making plans to invade Egypt, because this city was about to be given to 'Amr bin 'Aas as a reward for his attempts to devastate Imam's (as) government. When Imam 'Ali (as) heard that Mu'awiyah was about to march towards Egypt, he tried to strengthen Muhammad bin Abi Bakr with forces, but after some time the news of occupancy on Egypt and martyrdom of Muhammad bin Abi Bakr was given to Imam (as). Imam 'Ali (as) was very sad to hear the news of Muhammad's martyrdom. After Muhammad's martyrdom, Imam appointed Malik Ashtar as the new governor of Egypt and wrote to him his famous treaty related to the rules of governorship. However, with all the means of his satanic ways, the cunning Mu'awiyah was successful in poisoning him by betrayal.[1]

The Decline and Dispersion of the Nation

The deviating influences of the day of Saqifah manifested during the last days of Imam's (as) government. Mu'awiyah and his partisans fought against Islam from within. They successfully tried to remove the unity of the Islamic society and destroy it. In fact, they wanted to change the religion to what they preferred. Following three very important battles in the time of the Imam's (as) government, of which the Imam fought to remove the disturbances and revolts, the conditions of the Muslims can be summarized as such:

●Imam 'Ali (as) and his nation lost their most outstanding partisans, who had a great role in the progress of Islam, in these battles; the partisans whose presence along with Imam's (as)

1. **Tarikh Tabari**, 4:71-72, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh**, 3: 352-353, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah**, 6: 74- 75.

supervision could be very useful in formation of an Islamic society based on the teachings of Qur'an and Sunnah. Martyrdom of such people made Imam ‘Ali (as) so sad that he expressed his grief for his partisans in the following manner:

"What loss did our brothers whose blood was shed in Siffin suffer by not being alive today? Only that they are not suffering choking by swallowing and not drinking turbid water. By Allah, surely they have met Allah and He has bestowed upon them their rewards and He has lodged them in safe houses after their (having suffered) fear.

Where are my brethren who took the (right) path and walked in rightness? Where is `Ammar? Where is Ibn at-Tayyihan? Where is Dhu'sh-Shahadatayn? And where are others like them from among their comrades who had pledged themselves to death and whose (severed) heads were taken to the wicked enemy."

Then *the master of the faithful (Amir al-Mu'minin)* wiped his hand over his auspicious, honoured beard and wept for a long time, and then he continued:

"Oh! My brothers, who recited the Qur'an and strengthened it, thought over their obligation and fulfilled it, revived the sunnah and destroyed innovation. When they were called to jihad they responded and trusted in their leader then followed him."[1]

●Disobedience and dispersion of the troops and a feeling of tiredness in the rest of them, which was caused by martyrdom of a large number of Iraqi people came into being. The martyred people had extraordinary importance for Imam’s (as) government. Although, Imam ‘Ali (as) had an eloquent speaking power based on reasoning and courage for his troops, still he could not become successful in continuing the battle, neither could he create the firmness in his army.

One of the very important elements was the meetings of Mu’awiyah with the greedy leaders of different tribes. This method was very useful in creating disturbance and dispersion among the soldiers. Mu’awiyah kept meeting them and during his meetings

1. Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, **Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah**, 34: 127.

with them, he offered presents and high posts to them. On his return, he asked them to do their best to decrease the power of Imam 'Ali (as) and his partisans. After the battle of Nahrawan, Imam 'Ali (as) could not prepare an army in al- Nukhayla against Mu'awiyah. Most of his army entered Kufah in secret and Imam 'Ali (as) was compelled to cancel his army camp and delay the battle.[1]

●The condition of Imam 'Ali (as) and other Muslims provided Mu'awiyah with a chance to attack everywhere in the country. He started killing, making the people prisoners or warning the people. First, he attacked on the outskirts of Iraq. Mu`awiyah sent a contingent of two thousand soldiers under an-Nu`man ibn Bashir to assault `Aynu't-Tamr. He deputized Sufyan ibn `Awf al-Ghamidi with a force of six thousand to attack Hit, al-Anbar and al-Mada'in. However, Imam 'Ali (as) tried to defend against Mu'awiyah's attacks. For this, he asked the Muslims for help, but they did not respond to him at once. That is why Mu'awiyah was successful to weaken Imam 'Ali's (as) government, making the chances of his own rule more and more powerful.[2]

Mu'awiyah sent Busr ibn Abi Artaah to Hijaz and he shed the blood of thousands of innocent persons from Hijaz up to Yemen, burnt alive tribes after tribes in fire and killed even the children and the women. When Imam 'Ali (as) saw Mu'awiyah'skillings and when he found how the people of his own army were leaving him alone in such conditions, he become so sad that he very clearly said to them:

"O my Allah, they are disgusted with me and I am disgusted with them. They are weary of me and I am weary of them. Change them for me with better ones and change me for them with a worse one."[3]

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1. **Tarikh Tabari** 4:67-68, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh** 3: 349-350.
2. **Gharat al-Thaqafi** 2:453-471, **Tarikh Tabari** 4:102-103, **al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh**3: 375-380.
3. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah 1:65, **Gharat al-Thaqafi** 2:636, **al-Taaqat al-Kubra** 5:93, **Ibn Haban al-Thouqat** 2:301.

Imam ‘Ali (as) warned his army of dark days which were coming towards them as the result of their betrayal of their caliph (Imam ‘Ali (as)). He said:

"So you should return to your evil places, and get back on the traces of your heels. Beware! Certainly you will meet after me, overwhelming disgrace and the sharp sword and tradition that will be adopted by the oppressors as a norm towards you."[1]

Imam’s (as) Last Efforts

After the disturbance was obvious everywhere and seeing that Mu’awiyahwas becoming successful in making the people dispersed everywhere in the Islamic country, Imam ‘Ali (as) decided to open a deadly battlefield against him and asked his nation to help him in this regard. Therefore, he addressed them with a warning, saying:

"O people! I am tired of talking to and warning you. Make your position clear to me. What do you want to do? If you want to help me in my battle against the enemies, it is ok; otherwise tell me about your decision. I swear by God that if all of you do not help me in this battle, still the Lord is the Arbitrator between me and them and He is the Best Arbitrator. In this case, I certainly will curse you. I will fight against the enemies even if I have only ten companions."[2]

When the people heard this warning, their conscience did not allow them not to take the side of Imam ‘Ali (as) any longer, for they were sure now that Imam ‘Ali (as) and his partisans were going to open the battlefield against Mu’awiyah even if they did not help Imam (as). They were sure that in this case, the shamefulness would remain with them till the Day of Judgment and the people after them would put a curse upon them saying they did not help their leader. That is why the chiefs of all the tribes came forward and confirmed their presence in the battle against Mu’awiyah so that the disturbance spread by him could be finished. They

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1. Ibn A'atham Kitab **al-Fotouh** 4:257, **Gharat al-Thaqafi** 2:492 Ibn Qutaybah, **al-Imamah wa’l-Siyasah** 1:171.
2. al-Buladhari, **Ansab al-Ashraf**: 477.

marched towards "Nukhayla" where Imam ‘Ali (as) was waiting for the holy month of Ramadan to be finished and then attack Mu’awiyah. They were marching towards Imam ‘Ali (as) and every group of them tried to reach Imam ‘Ali (as) first.

CHAPTER FIVE
IMAM 'ALI (AS), A MARTYR OF THE ALTAR

The enemies once again started their conspiracies in knocking down the flag of the truth down and in favour of cutting the hands of the ones reaching out their hands for good and the removal of evil. They did this so that their oppression could remain hidden and unknown to the people. In days past, Abu Sufyan made plans for the Prophet's (sawas) murder, and continued to conspire to bury the prophetic mission in its cradle, but he could not succeed in this, because Allah the Almighty decided to manifest His light everywhere in the world. Now it was Mu'awiyah's term to try to bring an end to Imam 'Ali's (as) life – who kept working for the continuation of the prophetic mission after demise of the Prophet (sawas) – and complete the same plans and conspiracies of his father. Mu'awiyah had the help of a group of ignorant people. Dangerous and deadly conspiracies were committed in order to remove truth and justice and the conscience of the people, and to kill the one who had revived the religion of the Prophet (sawas).

With no consideration they decided to eliminate the light of guidance – Imam 'Ali (as) – so the darkness would overcome their deeds based upon disturbances and devastation. Satan reached out his hand and shook hands with Ibn Muljam at night and there was a signed agreement between Ibn Muljam (may curse be upon him) and the Satan to attack the head of a pious servant of Allah in the mosque; the head of the person who only bowed it in the presence of his Lord the Almighty.

A group of misled people made plans for Imam 'Ali's (as) martyrdom. If we say that this plan was also made by Mu'awiyah, we are not wrong. These people decided to ambush and kill Imam 'Ali (as) in the morning on the way to the mosque.

Imam 'Ali (as) left his house when the nineteenth night of the month of Ramadan arrived. While looking over and over again towards the heavens, he thought for a while and said:

"Neither have I lied, nor has the Prophet (sawas) lied to me. Tonight is the night about which I have been already told."[1]

Till morning Imam 'Ali (as) was involved in prayers. In the morning he left for the mosque. As it was his habit to awaken the people, he said: "Prayers, Prayers."

Then he started offering his prayers. Suddenly, Abdull-Rahman Ibn Muljam (may curse be on him) appeared from nowhere and shouted the slogan of the Khawarij, "The government and rule is for Allah, not for you". Saying this, he attacked the head of Imam (as) with his sword. The sword went down on Imam's (as) head and badly wounded him. Imam 'Ali (as) shouted with a loud voice:

"By the Lord of the Ka'bah, I have been saved."

When voices of mourning came from the mosque, the people rushed towards the mosque and found their Imam 'Ali (as) wounded at the altar of the mosque. They bound his head with a piece of cloth and brought him home. The people were crying and mourning. Ibn Muljam (may curse be on him) was arrested. Imam 'Ali (as) recommended his son Imam Hassan (as), and his family to treat their prisoner in a good way. Imam 'Ali (as) said:

"Life for life; if I die, kill him the same way in which he has killed me, but if I survive, I will make my decision about him."[2]

Imam's (as) Will

The Commander of the faithful recommended Imam Hassan and Imam Hussain (as) along with the other members of his family saying:

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1. al-Fattal al-Nayshaburi, **Rawdat al-Wa'izin**: 136, **Irshad** al-Mufid 1: 16, **al-Sawa'aq al-Muhriqah**: 80.
2. Al-Qadi al-Magribi **Sharh al-Akhbar** 2: 442, al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 42: 231-232, **Tarikh Tabari** 4: 112, **Maqatil al-Talibin**: 33, **Al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh** 3:390, **Manaqib** al-Khawarizmi: 384.

I advise you to fear Allah, do not go after this vicious world though it may try to entice you, do not seek it though it may seek you and do not grieve over and pine for things which this world refuses you. Let the eternal Reward and Blessings of Allah be the prompting factors for all that you say and do. Be an enemy of tyrants and oppressors and be a friend and helper of those who are oppressed and tyrannized. Act according to the Book of Allah and on the way for Allah's pleasure, do not fear from any kind of warning or threat."[1]

The wound was so severe that Imam ‘Ali (as) did not live long. The time of his martyrdom had come. Just before leaving the world, Imam ‘Ali (as) recited this verse of the holy Qur’an,"Let all the workers work for the like of this" and then his pure soul left for Heaven.[2]

The Mourning and Burial Ceremony

Imam Hassan and Imam Hussain (as) buried their father. Before the burial Imam Hassan (as), and some of the members of his family offered the prayer over the Imam’s (as) body. When the prayer finished, the dead body of Imam ‘Ali (as) was taken to Najaf and was buried near Kufah. The burial ceremony of Imam ‘Ali (as) was done at night.

At that time, Sa'sa'ah bin Soohan stood and delivered his verses regarding Imam’s (as) mourning:

"O Abi Hassan, may you enjoy your martyrdom. Indeed, your birthplace was pure and your tolerance and patience was plentiful. Also your jihad in the way of Allah the Almighty was very great. You achieved your goals and your business was full of benefits. You met your God and your Lord welcomed you. The Angels surrounded you. You sat near the Prophet (sawas) and Allah the Almighty blessed you with generosity. You also gained the post which your cousin the Prophet (sawas) had and he made your thirst be quenched with his own hands.

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1. **Manaqib** al-Khawarizmi: 384, **Nahj al-Balaghah** 3: 76, **Kashif al-Ghummah** 2:58.
2. Ibn Tawus **Al-Tara'if**: 44, al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 42: 293.

I thank Allah for He blessed us with his grace and we were able to follow you and act according to your saying. We were friends to your friends and the enemies to your enemies. May Allah cause us to associate with His friends! You have gained a blessing which was given to no one before you. You achieved a post which was received by no one else. You fight accompanying your brother, the Prophet (as), in the way of Allah. You made applicable the religion of Allah in the most suitable manner. You kept the traditions and removed the disturbances. In this way, Islam was made constant and the faith was made immortal. May the blessings of Allah be upon you!"

He added:

"Allah the Almighty has provided you with a high rank and post. You were the nearest relative of the Prophet (sawas). You brought Islam before anyone else. Your faith in Allah was more than everyone else's and you were the most brave person of all. You went for Jihad before anyone else. Your participation in good deeds was also more than the other people. May Allah not deprive us from the reward which is to be given by You.

By Allah the Almighty, your life was a key for good deeds and a lock for evils, but your loss is the key for every evil and the lock for every good deed. If the people would have listened to your advice, the blessings of Allah would be showered on them from everywhere, but they did not recognize you and gave their world preference over hereafter."[1]

1. Al-Majlisi, **Bihar al-Anwar** 42: 295-296.

CHAPTER SIX
IMAM 'ALI'S (AS) SCIENTIFIC INHERITANCE

After the demise of the Prophet (sawas), the first action of Imam 'Ali's (as) was to compile the holy Book of Allah – which the Prophet (sawas) recommended to him. The holy Qur'an which was compiled by Imam 'Ali (as) was according to the dates of the descent of each verse. Also, it had precious notes and information about the revelation of each verse never heard by anyone else, all of which could be very useful to the Muslims. Imam 'Ali (as) took his compiled Qur'an for the first caliph, but he did not accept it saying: We do not need this Qur'an. Imam 'Ali (as) warned the caliph that if they did not accept the Qur'an, the Muslims might not be able to see it again. And it was true. It is said that the Qur'an compiled by Imam 'Ali (as) was given to his sons from one to another as an inheritance.

Another writing of Imam 'Ali (as) is "Sahifah". This book was written on the rules of "blood-money". Bukhari, Muslim and Ahmed bin Hanbal have narrated many traditions about that book. Another book written by the great Imam 'Ali (as) was "Al-Jami'ah" which has been written about all Haram and Halal affairs related to the Muslims. Imam Sadiq (as) has said that the length of that book was 70 cubits, in which the rules about every problem of the people was mentioned; even blood-money for scratching.

Another book "Al-Jafar" centres on events of the future and highlights the books of previous prophets. It resembles '*Sahifah Fatimah*', which was written down by him and dictated by her after the demise of the Prophet (sawas). Jibraeel revealed future news to the Lady Fatimah and Imam 'Ali (as) wrote them down.[1]

All these books are known as inheritance of Imam 'Ali (as) and they were passed from one Imam to the other.

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1. **'Usoul al-Kafi** 1: 96- 99 & 274- 294.

A group of Muslim intellectuals compiled the sermons, letters and sayings of Imam ‘Ali (as) and chose suitable titles for them. The very first and the most famous compilation is "Nahjul Balagha (The Peak of Eloquence)compiled bySayidAl-Radhi (demised: 404 hijrah). This book contains the most beautiful wordings of Imam ‘Ali (as) about different fields of life such as doctrinal and,ethical matters, different governmental systems, governorship, history, sociology, psychology, prayers, worshipping, letters and recommendations. A group of intellectuals collected words of Imam ‘Ali (as) that were inaccessible to Sayid Al-Radhi, and gave them the name of "Mustadrikat Nahjul Balagha."

Nisaa'i (demised: 303 hijrah) compiled the topics, which Imam ‘Ali (as) narrated from the Prophet (sawas) and gave them the title of "Masnad Imam ‘Ali (as)"

Al-Amadi (Demised: between 520 to 550 hijrah) compiled the short words of Imam ‘Ali (as) under the title of "Ghurar al-Hikam and Durar al-Kalam."

Abu Ishaq Watwaat (demised: between 553 and 583 hijrah) compiled Imam ‘Ali’s (as) saying and gave them the title of "Matloob Kulle Talib Min Kalame ‘Ali Ibn Abi Talib". Jahiz (demised: 255 hijrah) also compiled a book about the Imam’s (as) saying under the title of "Maat Kalima". Tarbarsi, author of Majma' al-Bayan, compiled a book, too, containing the sayings of Imam ‘Ali (as), which he gave the title of "Nasr al-Laali". Another book compiled by Nasr bin Muzahim is "Waqiat al-Siffin" which contains the sermons and letters of Imam ‘Ali (as). "Sahifah al-Alawiyyah" is the book containing the Imam’s (as) prayers and eulogies.

Nahjul Balagha

If the holy Book of Allah is known as a miracle for the holy Prophet (sawas), Nahjul Balagha is also a miracle of Imamate. Short lines with great meanings which can be observed everywhere in the book, shows the writing method of Imam ‘Ali (as) and, of course, they are also related to revelation of the Prophet (sawas). Every topic, which Imam ‘Ali (as) discusses, shows that it has

already been discussed by Allah the Almighty and His Messenger (sawas).[1]

According to Sayid Al-Radhi:

The master of the faithful (Amir al-Mu'minin) (as) was the fountain of eloquence and (his utterances) the source of rhetoric. Through him hidden delicacies of eloquence and rhetoric came to light, and from him were learnt its principles and rules. Every speaker and orator had to tread on his footprints, and every eloquent preacher availed of his utterances. Even then they could not equal him, for the credit for being the first and foremost remained with him, because his utterances were those that carried the reflection of Divine knowledge and saviour of the Prophet's utterances.[2]

1. Intellect, Knowledge, Recognition

Imam ‘Ali (as) said:

●*There is no greater wealth than wisdom, no greater poverty than ignorance; no greater heritage than culture and no greater support than consultation.*

●*Through the intellect, one can arrive at the truth and this is the most satisfactory of processes. Using the capacity of the intellect is thus the key to success in a person’s life.*

●*Knowledge is the protector and the intellect is like a sharp sword, so protect your mistakes by patience, and fight your desires with your intellect.*

●*The intellect is the leader of merciful troops, and desires are the leader of the satanic troops, and humanity swings between them in its fight to win.*

●*Best of good luck is to have an intellect, if he loses it will safeguard him, if he fails it will lift him, and if he talks, it will lead him.*

●*The best of men is he who used his intellect, suppressed his desires and tried his utmost in providing the best for his hereafter.*

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1. **Hayat al-Imam Amir Al-Muminin fi 'Ahad al-Nabi** (sawas): 402.
2. **Nahj al-Balaghah** 1: 11, **Al-sirat al-Mustaqim** 1: 221.

●*Belief is as much as his intellect, no one believed without intellect, and a man is valued with his intellect.*

The importance of the intellect:

●*The mind of a wise man is the safest custody from sins; and he who looks at the consequences of his own decisions; and stays firm.*

●*The intellect is the source of knowledge and its way towards understanding.*

●*The mind increases by experience and knowledge.*

●*The hearts had desire, and the intellect forbid it from misuse.*

●*The intellectual is who knows the better of two evil acts.*

●*The intellectual refuses to accept wrongdoing.*

2. The Holy Book of Allah and Sunnah

Imam 'Ali (as) said about the holy Qur'an:

1. *Imam 'Ali said:"The best means by which seekers of nearness to Allah, the Glorified, the Exalted, seek nearness, is the belief in Him and His Prophet, fighting in His cause, for it is the high pinnacle of Islam, and (to believe) inthe (kalimatu'l-'ikhlas) the expression of Divine purification, for it is just nature and the establishment of prayer for it is (the basis of) community, payment of (zakat) the alms Islamic tax for it is a compulsory obligation, fasting for the month of Ramadan for it is the shield against chastisement, the performance of hajj of the House of Allah (i. e. Ka`bah) and its `umrah (other than annual visit) for these two acts banish poverty and wash away sins, regard for kinship for it increases wealth and length of life, giving alms secretly for it covers shortcomings, giving alms openly for it protects against a bad death and extending benefits (to people) for it saves from positions of disgrace."*

And know that this Qur'an is an adviser who never deceives, a leader who never misleads and a narrator who never speaks a lie. No one will sit beside this Qur'an but that when he rises he will achieve one addition or one diminution - addition in his guidance or elimination in his (spiritual) blindness. You should also know that no one will need anything after (guidance from) the Qur'an and no one will be

free from want before (guidance from) the Qur'an. Therefore, seek cure from it for your ailments and seek its assistance in your distresses. It contains a cure for the biggest diseases, namely unbelief, hypocrisy, revolt and misguidance. Pray to Allah through it and turn to Allah with its love. Do not ask the people through it. There is nothing like it through which the people should turn to Allah, the Sublime.

Know that it is an interceder and its intercession will be accepted. It is a speaker who is testified. For whoever the Qur'an intercedes on the Day of Judgement, its intercession for him would be accepted. He about whom the Qur'an speaks ill on the Day of Judgement shall testify to it. On the Day of Judgement an announcer will announce, "Beware, every sower of a crop is in distress except the sowers of the Qur'an." Therefore, you should be among the sowers of the Qur'an and its followers. Make it your guide towards Allah. Seek its advice for yourselves, do not trust your views against it and regard your desires in the matter of the Qur'an as deceitful.

2. And: "Know that this Qur'an is an adviser who never deceives, a leader who never misleads and a narrator who never speaks a lie. No one will sit beside this Qur'an but that when he rises he will achieve one addition or one diminution - addition in his guidance or elimination in his (spiritual) blindness. You should also know that no one will need anything after (guidance from) the Qur'an and no one will be free from want before (guidance from) the Qur'an. Therefore, seek cure from it for your ailments and seek its assistance in your distresses. It contains a cure for the biggest diseases, namely unbelief, hypocrisy, revolt and misguidance. Pray to Allah through it and turn to Allah with its love. Do not ask people through it. There is nothing like it through which the people should turn to Allah, the Sublime."

Imam ‘Ali (as) said: *"The Book of Allah is among you. It speaks and its tongue does not falter. It is ahouse whose pillars do not fall down, and a power whose supporters are never routed."*

Imam ‘Ali (as) said: *"Allah deputised the Prophet after a gap from the previous prophets when there had been aslumber for a long time and the twist of the rope had loosened. The Prophet came with a book containing a confirmationto what the last bookscontained and also with the light to be followed, thatis the Qur'an. If you ask it to speak it*

won't do so, but Iwill tell you about it. Know that it contains the knowledge of what is to come about, stories of the past, cures for your illnesses and regulation for whatever faces you."

Allah sent him with a sufficing plea, a convincing discourse and a rectifying announcement. Through him Allah disclosed the ways that had been forsaken, and destroyed the innovations that had been introduced. Through him He explained the detailed commands. Now, whoever adopts a religion other than Islam, his misery is definite, his stick (of support) will be cracked, his fate will be serious, his end will be long, grief and a distressing punishment.

And he said: "*Certainly this world is the end of the sight of the (mentally) blind who see nothing beyond it. The sight of an observer (who looks with the eye of his mind) pierces through and realises that the (real) house is beyond this world. The observer therefore wants to get out of it while the blind wants to get into it. The observer collects provision from it (for the next world) while the blind collects provision for this very world."*

And "*The Book of Allah is that through which you see, you speak and you hear. Its one part speaks for the other part, and one part testifies to the other. It does not create differences about Allah nor does it mislead its own follower from (the path of) Allah. You are joined together in hatred of each other and in the growing of herbage on your filth (i.e., for covering inner dirt by good appearance outside). You are sincere with one another in your love of desires and bear enmity against each other in earning wealth. The evil spirit (Satan) has perplexed you and deceit has misled you. I seek the help of Allah for myself and you."*

Imam Ali (as) called the people to act according to the Prophet's (sawas) Sunnah and has made the position of the Household (as) clear to the people regarding conveying the true Sunnah of the Prophet (sawas). He also revived some of the traditions of the Prophet (sawas), which were removed or hidden by those inclined towards falsehood. Imam 'Ali (as) has mentioned the reasons of deviation from the path of Sunnah. He said: "Certainly, what is current among the people is both right and wrong, true and false, repealing and repealed, general and particular, definite and indefinite, exact and surmised. Even during the Prophet's days

false saying had been attributed to him, so much falsehoods to me makes his abode in hell. "Those who relate traditions are of four categories, no more.

The master of the faithful (Amir al-Mu'minin) describes herein the members of the Prophet's family.

Imam ‘Ali (as) said: "They are life for knowledge and death for ignorance. Their forbearance tells you of their knowledge, and their silence of the wisdom of their speaking. They do not go against right nor do they differ (among themselves) about it. They are the pillars of Islam and the asylums of (its) protection. With them, right has returned to its position and wrong has left its place and its tongue is severed from its root. They have understood the religion attentively and carefully, not by mere heresayhearsay *or from relaters, because the relaters of knowledge are many but* its those who*understand*ers it *are few."*

3. Monotheism, Justice and Resurrection Day

For proving the existence of Allah, Imam ‘Ali (as) said:

"Praise be to Allah. He is such that senses cannot perceive Him, place cannot contain Him, eyes cannot see Him and veils cannot cover Him. He proves His eternity by the coming into existence of His creation, and (also) by originating His creation (He proves) His existence, and by their (mutual) similarity He proves that there is nothing similar to Him. He is true in His promise. He is too high to be unjust to His creatures. He stands by equity among His creation and practices justice over them in His commands. He provides evidence through the creation of things of His being from ever, through their marks of incapability of His power, and through their powerlessness against death of His eternity."

When he was asked whether he has seen his Lord, he said:

I wonder surprisingly from a person, who doubted the existence of Allah, then seeing the creation of Allah... as He is obvious for the intellect, with his creation and He manages the whole creations.

He added: He is One, but not by counting. He is everlasting without, any limit. He exists without any support. Minds admit of Him without (any activity of the) senses. Things which can be seen

stand witness to Him without confronting Him. Imagination cannot encompass Him. He manifests Himself to the imagination with his help for the imagination, and refuses to be imagined by the imagination. He has made imagination the arbiter (in this matter). He is not big in the sense that volume is vast and so His essence is also great. Nor is He great in the sense that His limits should extend to the utmost, so His frame be extensive. But He is big in position and great in authority.

In Imam's (as) famous prayer, which is known as "the prayer of Sabah", he has said: "*Oh He who demonstrates His Essence by His Essence, transcends congeniality with His creatures and is exalted beyond conformity with His qualities! Oh He who is near to the passing thoughts of opinions, far from the regards of eyes and knows what will be before it comes to be!"*

Imam 'Ali (as) delivered a sermon known as "the sermon of 'Alawiyyah" which was full of heavenly and worldly signs of Divine Power. He in his sermon sketched the Greatness of Allah in such a manner that the listeners were compelled to surrender themselves in His presence. If anyone reads it carefully, he will come to know that the personality of Imam 'Ali (as) is the same which he says: By God! If all the hurdles are removed from my eyesight, still nothing will be added in my faith in Allah.

About the Attributes of Allah, the sketches of the Commander of the faithful are very precise. These details are so minute that have been made the foundation of the philosophical discussions regarding Allah's Attributes. On the other hand, these sketches are the keys to enter such discussions. For this, the guidance of Allah is very important, otherwise the people would be misled and would go astray.

Imam 'Ali (as) said: "*The foremost in religion is the acknowledgement of Him, the perfection of acknowledging Him is to testify Him, the perfection of testifying Him is to believe in His Oneness, the perfection of believing in His Oneness is to regard Him Pure, and the perfection of His purity is to deny Him attributes, because every attribute is a proof that it is different from that to which it is attributed and everything to which something is attributed is different from the attribute. Thus*

whoever attaches attributes to Allah recognises His like, and who recognises His like regards Him two; and who regards Him two recognises parts for Him; and who recognises parts for Him mistook Him; and who mistook Him pointed at Him; and who pointed at Him admitted limitations for Him; and who admitted limitations for Him numbered Him."

Imam ‘Ali (as) by giving his own reasoning about Allah's Oneness says:

"Know, my son, that no one received messages from Allah, the glorified, as the prophet (sawas) did, and that if there had been a partner with your Lord, his messengers too should have come to you and you should have seen signs of his authority and power and you should have known his deeds and qualities, therefore, regard him as your forerunner and leader towards deliverance."

He said about Lord's Justice:

"He stands by equity among His creation and practices justice over them in His commands."

Then he added: "*He does not command you save for virtue and does not refrain you save from evil."*

"...and his justice within his creations is equal, and he refrains from entering some one in the heavens with a matter that he refuses an angel out of it."

4. The Divine Leadership

The suitable leaders are provided with the qualities of divine leadership and they are chosen for guiding His servants on the earth. This has always happened as a divine tradition and has been applied on that category of His servants, who have been provided with good thoughts and knowledge and who have been armed with authority and will.

This Divine Tradition started when Adam was made the most chosen person of Allah:*"Allah sent him down after (accepting) his repentance, to populate His earth with his progeny and to serve as a proof and plea for Him among his creatures.*

Even when He made Adam die, He. did not leave them without one

who would serve among them as proof and plea for His Godhead, and serve as the link between them and His knowledge, but He provided to them the proofs through His chosen Messengers and bearers of the trust of His Message, age after age till the process came to end with our Prophet Muhammad- may Allah may bless him and his descendants - and His pleas and warnings reached finality."

"Until this distinction of Allah, the Glorified, reached Muhammad - peace and blessing of Allah be upon him and his descendants. Allah brought him out from the most distinguished sources of origin and the most honourable places of planting, namely from the same (lineal) tree from which He brought forth other Prophets and from which He selected His trustees."

Imam ‘Ali (as) sketched the piety, bravery and humility of the prophets (as) and the divine consideration over them. He also mentioned how the prophets (as) were trained by divine tests and difficulties. Imam ‘Ali (as) also outlined their responsibilities; the responsibilities which dealt with calling the people towards Allah, telling good news and frightening them of the Day of Judgment, making the divine rules practical on earth, leading the people by making them free from ignorance and going astray, and opening the battlefields against the enemies of Allah.

"The guidance of Allah will remain till the Day of Judgment in different kinds. Allah's land (the earth) will never be empty from his Hujjat (proof). This Hujjat whether it is known to everyone or is feared and hidden. The reason of fearing is that the enemies of Allah may destroy him and his effects. After the demise of the Prophet (sawas), the responsibility of guiding the people was given to his purified progeny, who are the most suitable family among all the families of the world. Every word of the members of the Household (as) is based on truth; and if they keep silent about anything, no one has the right to talk before them. They are indeed the family-tree of prophecy; they are the origin for risalat (prophetic mission); their houses are the place for the angles' coming and going; they are the origins for all sciences, every branch of knowledge, and the pure wisdom; they have the highest rank in the presence of Allah.

Allah the Exalted saves through them His manifest signs and proofs. The Book of Allah is made known through them; a large number of the verses of the holy Qur'an have been revealed praising them; they are indeed the treasures of divine sciences and the most upright people in their knowledge and wisdom.

Their patience originates from their knowledge and wisdom; their appearance explains their heart and mind; and their silence is the result of their logic. They never stand against the truth. They are the bases and elements of Islam; the people come to them for shelter. Because of them the truth has become to its limit of certainty and because of them falseness has been removed. They are the bases for religion its elements. Those who have gone far ahead of them should return back to them, while those who are far behind should reach them. The specialties of guardianship and directorship belong to the Household of the Prophet (as); they are the people who share the will of the Prophet (sawas) and his inheritance."

Imam ‘Ali (as) stressfully condemned the political and intellectual position, which was considered to the holy Household (as) misplacing the succession of the Prophet (sawas) from its real place. Although, he was compelled to forget his post, he kept criticizing the policies of the caliphs both briefly and in detail. He introduced the ideas of the Prophet (sawas) after his demise for the betterment of the Muslims with complete sincerity. His efforts for benefiting the people of that time, who were passing through the most sensitive period, was in such a manner that it did not have a slight conflict with the difficult conditions of that period. He was successful in presenting a perfect theory of him. Also he was able to act upon his theory after the conditions were provided.

5. Imam Mahdi (as)

Although, after the demise of the Prophet (sawas), the Islamic society completely dispersed, the Holy Book of Allah, His Messenger (sawas) and Imam ‘Ali (as) delivered the good news on the appearance of Imam Mahdi (as) to the people of the world. Imam ‘Ali (as) said: "*Beware, it will be tomorrow and the morrow will come soon with things which you do not know. The Man in power, not from this crowd, will take to task all those were*

formerly appointed for their ill deeds and the earth will pour forth its eternal treasures and fling before him easily her keys. He will show you the just way of behaviour and revive the Qur'an andsunnahwhich have become lifeless (among people)."

Imam 'Ali's (as) sayings about Imam Al-Mahdi (as) are crystal clear, precise and apparent. Moreover, Imam 'Ali's (as) wording about the appearance of Imam Mahdi (as) points towards a universal movement, or rather a revolution, which will completely change the gloomy condition of the whole world.

Imam 'Ali (as) said about leadership of this revolution: *"He will direct desires towards (the path of) guidance while people will have turned guidance towards desires, and he will turn their views to the direction of the Qur'an while the people will have turned the Qur'an to their views."*

The institute of Nahjul Balagha has collected the Imam's (as) traditions related to Imam Mahdi (as) which exceeds 291 traditions. These traditions have been compiled in the form of a book. Among these traditions, fourteen traditions are related to the name, attributes and prayers of Imam Mahdi (as); 77 traditions are related to the family-tree of him saying that he is from Quraysh and Bani Hashim and the holy Household and the sons of Imam 'Ali (as) and Lady Fatima (as) – but rather, it has been said that he will be one of Imam Hussain (as)'s sons. Also he is one of the twelfth Imams (as). Moreover, 45 traditions are related to Imam Mahdi (as) from the viewpoint of the Qur'an, Nahjul Balagha and the poetical verses of Imam 'Ali (as); 23 traditions are about the partisans of Imam 'Ali (as) and related to their black flags; 12 traditions are about the Sufyanids and (*dajjal*) the imposter; 26 traditions are related the occultation of Imam (as), the difficulties of his Shias waiting for their Imam 'Ali (as) and the excellence of waiting for Imam's (as) appearance; 75 traditions are about disturbance and dispersions coming into being before Imam's (as) appearance, the signs of his appearance and after appearance, the appearance of Dabatal Ardh and Yajooj and Majooj; 19 traditions are related to the excellence and virtue of the mosque of Kufah and appearance of a man from the Household (as) from an Eastern country having a sword hung into his neck for eight months in such

a manner that the people will say swearing by Allah: This person is not from the sons of Lady Fatima. Then the condition of the land during appearance of Imam Mahdi (as) as well as his government has been mentioned.

Imam ‘Ali (as) said: *"O, Kumayl, there is no knowledge that I have no clue about it, and I have started to reveal, and there is no secret of life that the Imam Al-Mahdi (as) has no clue about and he will reveal.*

But with us, the religion is accomplished as with us it has commenced, and with us will be the saving frommisguidance as saving from going astray and polytheism, and with us the composing of God among their hearts in the religion after the animosity of sedition, as united between their hearts and their religion after the animosity of misguidance (shirk)."

The Commander of the Faithful (as) has then said: "If it has the Imam mahdi (Qaúmana) has appearedproclamedproclaimed the kingdom of God, it will rain, so that there there will be a lot surplus for giving, and it will raaiseise the ground flora, and the jealousyjoulesy and hateredhatred will go vanish from the hearts of the people, so that made up of even wild animals and beasts will make up and their hostility terminate., Peace wilwill be so widely spread that a even walking womaen walking between Iraq to Syriathesham, do not put her feetwill walkexcept on vegetations grassland, and she is wearing here best excessoriesaccessories on her head, and she hashaving no fear of beasts.

6. The Principles and Philosophy of Islamic Government

After demise of the Prophet (sawas), Imam ‘Ali (as) presented a practical and extraordinary example of Islamic Government, and then connected it with a perfect multidimensional theory, which can easily be observed in his famous charter for Malik Ashtar while appointing him as the governor of Egypt. The sociologists while interpreting, expressing and comparing this charter with other governmental charters, have shown lots of efforts. This charter is also one of the proofs for Imamate of Imam ‘Ali (as) with which the Shi'ah school of thought is distinguished from all other schools, which pretended to bear the name of Islam and/or the Islamic caliphate. On the other hand, this miraculous charter

makes us aware at Imam 'Ali's (as) wordings – which have reached us through Nahujl Balagha or other sources – related to extraordinary thoughts and views of Imam 'Ali (as) about Islam, its principles, philosophical progress and the distinguished features of the governmental system. In the following lines we will point to them in brief:

1. The government is a social need

- There is a necessity for a leader for the people, good or bad.
- The Imamah is the structure of the Muslim community.
- Justice offers support for the masses.
- The government of justice is a must.

2. The government is a real test for one's life

- There are six things through which the intellect of men can be examined with, the company –without business- that they keep, their business dealing with others, their disassociation from power and government, their wealth and their poverty.
- Power reveals the pious from the wicked.

3. The government is unpredictable and unstable

Imam 'Ali said:

- *As the state built up, it falls down.*
- *The changing, unstable position is bad and disgraceful.*

4. Then he said that a model government is a government whose foundation is laid on values and who provides its runners with the ability of making different necessary programs.

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

"The government of noble men is one of the greatest advantages, whereas the government of the wicked people humiliates noble people."

"(Oh God, You know that it was not us who compete for ruling the people (the Sultan) and do not seek anything from the curiosity of the world's debris, but we respond only to reinstate the (highlights) of

your religion, and show reform in your country, save the oppressed slaves and carry on what had been suspended of your rules)."

5. Some of the most important qualities of a model government are as follows

5/1 'Justice is a must for leadership'

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●*"Justice creates a system for ruling over citizens."*

●*"Citizens won't be fair unless with justice."*

●*"Following justice is when the divine institutions are maintained and the governments became stable."*

5/2 – 'Spreading knowledge'

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●*"It is one of the duties of the Imam (political leader) to teach his citizens the necessary rulings of being a Muslim and how to remain a believer."*

5/3 - Protecting the faith

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●*"The leaders are solely those who protect the faith."*

●*"Indeed affection and fulfilling the duties when one encourages the servants of God to keep the Almighty's ruling."*

●*"If any government has followed the Divines religion, it won't lose in any struggle."*

●*"If any ruler lets his government serve the religion, everyone will adhere to him."*

5/4 – 'How one should try his best to guide others'

●Imam 'Ali (as) said:*"There is nothing more incumbent on the Imam (political leader) than following the Divine orders: to try his best to preach to others and to try his best to guide them."*

5/5 – 'To punish criminals'

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●*"One of the duties of the Imam (political leader) is to punish the criminals."*

5/6 – 'To provide provisions to his citizens'

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●*"The best ruler is he who has given the best living standards (welfare) for his citizens."*

●*"As regards to your rights upon me, it is to guide you and provide you with your needed provision."*

5/7 – 'Educating the society'

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●*"One of my duties is to teach you, so that you won't remain ignorant and to lead you, so that you learn."*

5/8 – 'Defending the Muslim Ummah's dignity and its independence'

●Imam 'Ali (as) said:*"One of the leader's duties is to defend their frontiers and to maintain their borders."*

5/9 – 'To provide peace and security'

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●*"For all people there is an extreme need to be led by a leader – regardless of being pious or not – so that the believer would serve under that leadership that disbelievers would enjoy life there, that Almighty Allah (swt) would fulfill His promises and that provision is provided to people and peace and security is maintained by fighting the external enemies and internal security is achieved."*

5/10 – 'To support the oppressed'

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●*"One must protect the weak against the strong citizens, so that the pious individuals would feel safe and the transgressors' aggression is quelled."*

5/11 – 'To help those who are in need'

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●*"It's the purity to the leadership if those who are in need are helped."*

5/12 – 'To build up the country'

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●"*One of the virtues of the leadership is to build up the country."*

6. 'The quality of the ideal leader and the factors that lead to the stability'

6/1 – 'To adhere to the truth'

Imam Ali (as) said:

●*"Whoever is led by truth, people would follow him as an Imam (political leader)."*

●*"The most ideal leader is the one with self-restrain"*

●*"Anyone who can control himself with self-restrain, he realises the taste of politics."*

●*"If your decree has been done on yourself, then others will follow your example of Justice."*

●*"The pure intellect shall promote charity and prohibit evil."*

6/2 – 'To grasp the matters as they are'

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●*"The best leader is the one who leads them in a way that they have no excuse to criticise him and that they would surrender to his logical arguments."*

●*"The Imam (political leader) must have a sharp mind."*

6/3 – 'To have an eloquent expression method'

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●*"The Imam (political leader) must have an eloquent expression method."*

6/4 – 'To be brave in maintaining truth'

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●*"The Imam (political leader) must be with a brave heart, to be able to maintain the bitter justice."*

6/5 –'To have good intentions'

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●*"Purify your heart (be with good intentions) so Almighty God will give you good reputation amongst people."*

●*"The ideal leader is the one with good deeds, good intentions and remains just with his citizens and soldiers"*

6/6 - 'To be charitable with citizens'

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●*"If one (the leader) is charitable towards his citizens, Almighty Allah will shower him with mercy and forgive his mistakes and shortcomings."*

●*"If a leader does not give charity during his leadership, he will be let down during calamity."*

●*"Anyone who was kind with his citizens, he deserves to be a ruler."*

6/7 - 'Self-restraint'

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●*"The ideal leader is the one with best level of self self-restraint."*

●*"The master is someone who does not cheat, nor comes with fakeness or pretending, nor is tempted with this world's temptations."*

6/8 - 'Spreading justice'

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●*"The essence of politics is justice"*

●*"Anyone who is just, his decrees will be followed."*

●*"Anyone who spreads justice, people will praise the era of his reign."*

●*"Anyone who is just in his ruler, won't need any supporters."*

●*"Anyone who follows just principles, Almighty God will protect his kingdom."*

●*"The ideal leader, with regards to his virtues, is the one who treats all his citizens with Justice."*

6/9 - 'To be economically wise'

Imam ‘Ali (as) said:

●*"No one will lose, nor perish, if he is economically wise."*

●*"To be wise politically and economically, one would be everlasting in his leadership."*

●*"To be economically wise and refraining from wasting resources, are some good examples of smart politics."*

6/10 - 'To be fair'

Imam ‘Ali (as) said:

●*"Being fair is the beauty of leadership."*

●*"The purity of being powerful is to remain fair at all times."*

6/11 - 'Affection'

Imam ‘Ali (as) said:

●*"The top politics is to remain affectionate while dealing with people."*

●*"Affection is the best politics."*

6/12 - 'Patience and controlling anger'

Imam ‘Ali (as) said:

●*"Controlling anger is the main of politics."*

●*"The best tool towards politics is to remain patient."*

●*"Beat your servants if they disobey Almighty Allah (swt) and forgive them if they disobey your personal order."*

●*"To forgive others is the purity (zakat) of being powerful."*

●*"The politics of justice can be summarised in three principles; to remain lenient while being firm, to be thorough while remaining just and to remain moderate while being charitable."*

6/13 - 'Defending religion'

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●*"Keep the religion like a shield to your leadership and be thankful as insurance for your bounties to continue, as each and every leadership which is protected with religion will not be defeated and every bounty, which is combined with being thankful will not disappear."*

6/14 - 'To remain pious'

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●*"Seek assistance of justice whilehaving good intentions with regards to people, to not to be excessively greedy and to remain rich in piety."*

6/15 - 'To keep the feeling with being entrusted with a divine treasure' Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●*"Surelythe ruler is entrusted with a Divine treasure on being a governor on earth."*

●*"This money is not indeed mine, nor yours, rather it belongs to all Muslims."*

●*"Your status (as a director) is not a hunted item to you."*

6/16 - 'To remain alert'

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●*"One of the signs of being in charge is to remain alert, guarding the nation's affairs."*

●*"Anyone who does not remain alert and awake, will not benefit from being vigilantly guarded"*

●*"Being noble means that one should remain alert with regards to other citizens, but disregard those who are not fair with you (personally)."*

6/17 - 'To be ordered with something impossible' Imam ‘Ali (as) said:

●*"If you want to be obeyed and/or respected, just ask something that is possible."*

6/18 - 'Not to be seduced with power'

●Imam ‘Ali (as) said:"*Anyone who is noble won't be seduced with any position - regardless of how elevated the position he has been given - and if any indecent person is given a position, he or she will have irresponsible expectations."*

6/19 - 'Distributing tasks and allocating everybody's responsibility' Imam ‘Ali (as) said:

●*"All tasks can be met and performed with sufficient labours."*

●*"Allocate for each and every individual of your labourers a task that he or she would be responsible to perform, as this would discourage them from relying irresponsibly on each other."*

6/20 - 'Generosity'

Imam Ali (as) said:

●*"Anyone who uses the given sources to those who deserve charity, he or she deserves the position of leadership."*

●*"Anyone who uses that of what he is blessed with, will be praised."*

●*"To be generous, give back the rightful superiority."*

●*"The beauty of leadership is to be charitable."*

7. 'Factors that lead to the destruction of governments'

Imam ‘Ali (as) said:

●*"Any government is about to be waved away just like how it came."*

7/1 - 'Ignorance'

Imam ‘Ali (as) said:

●*"The government of one who is ignorant, is like a foreigner in a transitioned phrase."*

●*"Any bad decision would result in the destruction of a whole government and may lead to it being totally perished."*

●*"Anyone with an unwise decision shall be faced with strong enemies."*

●*"The most widely spread ignorance is fighting the powerful."*

●*"On top of ignorance is standing against the masses."*

7/2 - 'To refrain from consulting'

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●*"Anyone who insists on his sole wrong opinion, without consulting, will perish."*

●*"Anyone who thinks that he does not need to consult with others while making a decision will perish."*

●*"Anyone who is happy with his sole personal opinion will perish."*

7/3 - 'Following personal desires'

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●*"The worst leader is the one who lets himself indulge and be led by his own desire."*

●*"Anyone who lets his desires win over his intellect will be overwhelmed with the outcome."*

●*"Anyone who is led by his personal desire will not accept any good advice from others."*

7/4 - 'Not to have centralised decision - making organisations or not having a united leadership'.

●Imam 'Ali (as) said: *"Having rivals in leadership would lead to chaotic conditions."*

7/5 - 'Following untruth and trivialising religion'

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●*"Anyone who adheres to untruth, he will perish."*

●*"Anyone who makes the religion serve the governorship,*

everyone will feel tempted to attach himself."

●*"Don't fight someone who is protected by following the Divine faith, as you won't be victorious, rather defeated.*

●*Anyone who stands against the Divine will, he will be defeated."*

7/6 - 'Transgression and Justice'

Imam ‘Ali (as) said:

●*"One of the adverse defects to power is transgression and injustice."*

●*"Anyone who launches transgression will be its first victim."*

●*"Anyone who chooses unjust methods will be doomed to failure."*

●*"Anyone who treats his citizens with injustice will be immediately punished."*

●*"Anyone who is being praised with injustice will be equally tricked with it."*

●*"Anyone who is known with unjust decrees will be deprived of their powers."*

●*"The hearts of citizens are reflecting whatever they have been treated with of justice or injustice."*

●*"The worst governor is when the innocent citizens fear him/her."*

●*"If the leader of the Muslim nation is generous with what is rightfully Muslims', he is indeed an unjust leader."*

●*"The deficit of a civilisation is injustice."*

●*"If Almighty Allah (swt) gives the unjust ruler plenty of time, it does not mean that it is hard for Allah to punish him, as he is waiting to punish him in the long run and to get it later from his throat."*

7/7 - 'Arrogance and feeling proud'

Imam ‘Ali (as) said:

●*"One of the deficits of leadership is being proud."*

●*"Anyone who is proud during his leadership, it's just a reflection*

of his stupidity."

●*"Anyone who seeks arrogance during his reign will be deprived of their powers."*

●*"Being arrogant when you are in charge, leads you to total isolation when being dismissed."*

7/8 -'Depriving charity'

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●*"Anyone who knows how to be charitable while being in charge will never lose."*

●*"One of the defects of being powerful is to refrain charity to others."*

●*"Whoever is not charitable while being in charge will be in total isolation when being dismissed."*

7/9 - 'Wasting resources and being economically unwise'

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●*"No one will lose, if they know how to be economically wise."*

●*"To be economically wise and refraining from wasting resources are some good examples of politics."*

●*"Anyone who does not make wise economic decisions will immediately be punished."*

●*"Wasting economic resources will lead to total destruction."*

7/10 - 'Carelessness'

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●*"Anyone who does not remain alert and awake will not benefit from being vigilantly guarded."*

●*"Anyone who gets involved in serious matters without properly reflecting the consequences, he or she will be most probably victim of severe circumstances."*

7/11 - Revenge.

Imam 'Ali said:

●*"No one will be blessed with elevated positions while thinking solely on how to get revenge."*

7/12 - 'Making decisions'

Imam ‘Ali (as) said:

●*"One can predict the collapse of great regimes by four signs; taking wrong and ill decisions, the waste of economic resources, not taking lessons from others bad experiences and results and coming with constant excuses."*

7/13 - 'Being distant from the noble goals'

Imam ‘Ali (as) said:

●*"One can prove the destruction of certain governments from four signs; being distant from the noble goals, being constantly arrogant, giving the promiscuous their priority, whilst the noble individuals are second in priority."*

●*"The evil governor may solely grant acrimonious individuals high positions."*

●*"Giving high positions to those irresponsible and promiscuous individuals is a great sign to its immediate punishment."*

7/14 - 'Treachery'

Imam ‘Ali (as) said:

●*"The greatest treachery is being treacherous to the Ummah."*

●*"If treachery becomes widely spread, blessings for the Ummah will disappear."*

●*"If the (Wazir) minister is cheating, then the whole government is futile."*

●*"If the delegate is lying, then it would lead to total destruction, not achieving the goals and not being able to be firm, nor decisive."*

7/15 - 'The weak politics'

Imam ‘Ali (as) said:

●*"If having good measures gets postponed; the rapid destruction is*

to be expected."

●*"The deficit of leaders is their weak and futile policy."*

●*"The deficit of the powerful is in under estimating the enemy."*

7/16 - 'Having bad and acrimonious acts'

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●*"The deficit of leaders lays in their bad and acrimonious acts."*

7/17 - 'Shortcomings of labours'

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●*"Having many tasks to do is the best measure to keep labour properly functioning."*

●*"The deficit of any work is when the labourers face their shortcomings."*

7/18 - 'Having weak protections'

Imam Ali (as) said:

●*"The deficit of leadership is having weak protections."*

7/19 - 'Having suspicion on those giving good advice'

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●*"One of the signs of the beginning of a government's destruction, is when one is suspicious of the one who gives good advice."*

7/20 - 'The greedy leaders'

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

●"*The pious leader is he who does not trick, lie or is greedy."*

●*"Being greedy would leave the leader humiliated."*

7/21 - 'The absence of security'

Imam 'Ali said (as):

●*"The worst country is where there is no security."*

An Letter to Maalik al-Ashtar

Maalik al-Ashtar was a famouscompanion of Imam 'Ali (as). He was

the head of the Bani Nakha'i clan. He was a faithful disciple of Imam ‘Ali (as). He was a brave warrior and had acted as a Commander-in-Chief of the armies of Imam ‘Ali (as). His valour had earned him the title of "Fearless Tiger." Imam ‘Ali (as) had specially taught him the principles of administration and jurisprudence. He venerated and loved Imam ‘Ali (as) sincerely and earned Mu'awiya's enmity on that account. Mu'awiya had conspired against him and got him killed by his gang of hirelings. His untimely death deeply grieved Imam ‘Ali (as) who, expressing his grief, said: "He was to me what I was to the Holy Prophet (s)." The following instructions in the form of a letter was written to him by Imam ‘Ali (as) who appointed him as the Governor of Egypt in place of Muhammad bin Abi Bakr:

In The Name Of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

These are the orders issued by the creature of Allah, ‘Ali, the son Abu Taalib (as) to Maalik, the son of Ashtar when he appointed Maalik as the Governor of Egypt to collect Zakat there, to combat the enemies of Islam and Egypt, to work for the welfare of its people and to look after its prosperity.

I order you, Maalik, always to keep the fear of Allah in your mind, to give priority to His worship and to give preference to obeying His Commands over every other thing in life, to carefully and faithfully follow the commandments and interdictions as are given by the Holy Book and the traditions of the Holy Prophet (sawas) because the success of a man to attain happiness in this world and in the next depends upon these qualities, and a failure to achieve these attributes brings about total failure in both the worlds.

I order you to use your head, heart, hands and tongue to help the creatures of Allah because the Almighty Allah holds Himself responsible to help those who sincerely try their best to help Him. Allah has further ordered you to keep your desires under control, to keep yourself under restraint when extravagant and inordinate yearnings and cravings try to drive you towards vice and wickedness because usually your 'self' tries to incite and drag you towards infamy and damnation unless the Merciful Lord comes to your help.

Let it be known to you, Maalik, that I am sending you as a governor to a country which has seen many regimes before this. Some of them

were benign, sympathetic and good, while others were tyrannical, oppressive and cruel. People will judge your regime as critically as you have studied the activities of other regimes and they will criticize you in the same way as you have censured or approved other rulers.

You must know that a good and virtuous man is known and recognized by the good that is said about him and the praise which Allah has destined him to receive from others. Therefore, make your mind the source and fountain-head of good thoughts, good intentions and good deeds. This can only be attained by keeping a strict control on your desires and yearnings, however much they may try to incite and coerce you. Remember that the best way to do justice to your inner self and to keep it out of harm, is to restrain it from vice and from things which the 'self' inordinately and irrationally desires.

Maalik! You must create in your mind kindness, compassion and love for your subjects. Do not behave towards them as if you are a voracious and ravenous beast and as if your success lies in devouring them.

Remember, Maalik, that amongst your subjects there are two kinds of people: those who have the same religion as you have; they are brothers to you, and those who have religions other than that of yours, they are human beings like you. Men of either category suffer from the same weaknesses and disabilities that human beings are inclined to, they commit sins, indulge in vices either intentionally or foolishly and unintentionally without realizing the enormity of their deeds. Let your mercy and compassion come to their rescue and help in the same way and to the same extent that you expect Allah to show mercy and forgiveness to you.

Maalik! You must never forget that if you are a ruler over them than the caliph is the ruler over you and Allah is the Supreme Lord over the caliph. And the reality is that He has appointed you as the governor and tested you through the responsibility of this rulership over them.

Never think of raising yourself to such a false prestige that you can declare war against Allah because you cannot ward off His Wrath and you can never be free from the need of His Mercy and Compassion.

Do not feel ashamed to forgive and forget. Do not hurry over punishments and do not be pleased and do not be proud of your power to punish. Do not get angry and lose your temper quickly over the mistakes and failures of those over whom you rule. On the contrary, be patient and sympathetic with them. Anger and desire of vengeance are not going to be of much help to you in your administration.

Never say to yourself, "I am their Lord, their ruler and all in all over them and that I must be obeyed submissively and humbly" because such a thought will unbalance your mind, will make you vain and arrogant, will weaken your faith in religion and will make you seek support of any power other than that of Allah. If you ever feel any pride or vanity on account of your sway and rule over your subjects then think of the supreme sway and rule of the Lord over the Universe, the extent of His creations, the supremacy of His Might and Glory, His Power to do things which you cannot even dream of doing and His control over you which is more dominating than that which you can ever achieve over anything around you. Such thoughts will cure your mental weakness, will keep you away from vanity and rebellion (against Allah), will reduce your arrogance and haughtiness and will take you back to the sanity which you had foolishly deserted.

Take care never to think of bringing yourself at par with Allah, never to think of matching your power with Him and contesting His Glory and ever to pretend that you possess might and power like Him because the Mighty Lord will always humble pitiless tyrants and will degrade all pretenders of His Power and Might.

So far as your own affairs or those of your relatives and friends are concerned take care that you do not violate the duties laid down upon you by Allah and do not usurp the rights of mankind, be impartial and do justice to them because if you give up equity and justice then you will certainly be a tyrant and an oppressor. And whoever tyrannizes and oppresses the creatures of Allah, will earn enmity of Allah along with the hatred of those whom he has oppressed; and whoever earns the Wrath of Allah loses all chances of salvation and he has no excuse to offer on the Day of Judgement.

Every tyrant and oppressor is an enemy of Allah unless he repents

and gives up oppression. Remember, Maalik! that there is nothing in this world more effective to turn His Blessings into His Wrath quicker than to insist upon oppression over His creatures because the Merciful Allah will always hear the prayers of those who have been oppressed and He will give no chance to oppressors.

You must always appreciate and adopt a policy which is neither too severe nor too lenient; a policy which is based upon equity will be largely appreciated. Remember that the displeasure of common men, the have-nots, and the depressed persons more gutweighs the approval of important persons, while the displeasure of a few big people will be excused by the Lord if the general public and the masses of your subjects are happy with you.

Remember, Maalik! They are the people who will be the worst drag upon you during your moments of peace and happiness, and the least useful to you during your hours of need and adversity, they hate justice the most, they will keep on demanding more and more out of the State resources and will seldom be satisfied with what they receive and will never be obliged for the favour shown to them if their demands are justifiable refused, they will never accept any reasonable excuse or any rational argument and when the time changes, you will never find them staunch, faithful and loyal.

While the common men, the poor and apparently the less important section of your subjects are the pillars of Islam, they are the real assemblage of Muslims and the power and defensive force against the enemies of Islam. Keep your mind on their affairs, be friendlier with them and secure their trust and goodwill.

But be careful in forming your contacts (whether with the most important persons or the commoners); keep such people away from you and think them to be the enemy of the State who are scandal-mongers and who try to find fault with others and carry on propaganda against them because everywhere people have weaknesses and failings and it is the duty of the government to overlook (minor) shortcomings. You must not try to go in search of those weaknesses which are hidden from you, leave them to Allah, and about those weaknesses which come to your notice, you must try to teach them how to overcome them. Try not to expose the weaknesses of the people and Allah will conceal your own

weaknesses which you do not want anybody to know.

Do not give cause to the people to envy each other (man against man, tribe against tribe or one section of the society against the other). Try to alleviate and root out mutual distrust and enmity from amongst your subjects.

Be fair, impartial and just in your dealings with all, individually and collectively and be careful not to make your person, position and favours act as sources of malice. Do not let any such thing or such person come near to you who does not deserve your nearness and your favour. Never lower your dignity and prestige.

Remember that backbiters and scandal-mongers belong to a mean and cunning group, though they pretend to be sincere advisers. Do not make haste to believe the news they bring and do not heed to their advice.

Do not accept the advice of misers; they will try their best to keep you away from acts of kindness and from doing good to others. They will make you frightened of poverty.

Similarly do not allow cowards to act as your advisers because they will make you timid in enforcing your orders, will scare you from handling important affairs boldly and will make your enterprises and invasions timid and timorous attempts. At the same time avoid greedy and covetous persons who would aspire to the position of acting as your counsellor because he will teach you how to exploit the community and how to oppress people to get their wealth. Remember that miserliness, cowardice and greed appear to be different wicked qualities but they all arise from the same evil mentality of having no faith and no trust in Allah.

Your worst ministers will be the men who had been ministers to the despotic rulers before you and who had been a party to atrocities committed by them. Such persons should not be taken into your confidence and should not be trusted because they have aided sinners and have assisted tyrants and cruel rulers.

In their stead you can comfortably find persons who are equally wise and learned but who have not developed sinful and criminal mentalities, who have neither helped the tyrants in their tyrannies nor

have they assisted them to carry on their sinful deeds. Such persons will prove the least troublesome to you. They will be the most helpful. They will sincerely sympathise with you. If you take them in your confidence they will sever their connections with your opponents. Keep such people with you as your companions in your informal company as well as in official gatherings in audience. From amongst such honest and humane companions and ministers some would receive your fullest confidence and trust. They are those who can always speak out the bitter truth to you and unreservedly and without fear of your status, can refuse to assist you or associate with you in the deeds which Allah does not like His good creatures to commit.

Select honest, truthful and pious people as your companions. Train them not to flatter you and not to seek your favour by false praises because flattery and false praises create vanity and conceit and they make a man lose sight of his real self and ignore his duties.

You should not treat good and bad people alike because in this way you will be discouraging good persons and at the same time emboldening the wicked to carry on their wickedness. Everyone should receive the treatment which his deeds make him deserve.

Try carefully to realize that a ruler can create goodwill in the minds of his subjects and can make them faithful and sincere to him only when he is kind and considerate to them, when he reduces their troubles, when he does not oppress them and when he never asks for things which are beyond their power.

These are the principles which you should keep in mind and act upon. Let your attitude be such that they do not lose faith in you because a good faith on their part will reduce many troubles of administration and will relieve you of many worries and anxieties. And so far as your confidence and trust is concerned, let it rest with those people whom you have tested in difficulties and whom you have befriended, but you should always mistrust those people whom you have wronged or who have proved themselves undeserving, inefficient or unfaithful.

Do not give up those practices and do not break those rules which good Muslims have evolved or introduced before you, which have created unity and amity among the various sections of the society and which have benefited the masses.

Do not break them and do not introduce innovations because if you do away with those good rules and traditions, the reward of having introduced them will go to those who evolved them and the punishment of having despoiled them will be your lot.

You must know, Maalik, that the people over whom you rule are divided into classes and grades and the prosperity and welfare of each class of the society individually and collectively are so interdependent upon the well-being of the other classes that the whole set-up represents a closely woven net and reciprocal aspect. One class cannot exist peacefully, cannot live happily and cannot work without the support and good wishes of the other.

Amongst them there are the soldiers of the army of Allah who defend His cause, the next class is that of the secretaries of the State to whom duties of writing out and issuing special or general orders are assigned, the third group is of the judges and magistrates to administer justice, the fourth is of officers who maintain law and order and guard the peace and prosperity of the country. Then there are common men, the Muslims who pay the taxes levied by the government, and non-Muslims who pay the taxes levied by the government, and non-Muslims who pay tribute to the State (in lieu of taxes). Then comes the class of men who carry on various professions and trades and the last but not the least are the poor and the have-nots who are considered as the lowest class of the society. The Merciful Allah has fixed rights and duties of each one of them. They have been either mentioned in His Book or explained through the instructions of the Holy Prophet (s). A complete code of them is preserved with us.

As far as the soldiers are concerned, they are by the commands of Allah, a fortress and stronghold to guard and defend the subjects and the State. They are the ornaments of the ruler and the country. They provide power and protection to the religion. They propagate and preserve peace among mankind. In fact, they are the real guardians of peace and through them good internal administration can be maintained. The upkeep and maintenance of an army depends upon the taxes collected by the State out of which Allah has fixed for them a share. With this amount they provide for their requirements, maintain themselves and their arms in sound position to defend the religion

and the cause of justice.

The army and the common men (common citizens who pay taxes or tributes) are two important classes, but in a Welfare State their well-being cannot be guaranteed without proper functioning and preservation of the other classes, the judges and magistrates, the secretaries of the State and the officers of various departments who collect various revenues, maintain law and order as well as preserve peace and amity among the diverse classes of the society. They also guard the rights and privileges of the citizens and look to the performances of various duties by individuals and classes. And the prosperity of this whole set-up depends upon the traders and industrialists. They act as a medium between the consumers and the suppliers. They collect the requirements of the society. They exert to provide goods. They open up shops, markets and trading centres. Thus providing the consumers with their necessities, they relieve the citizens of the need of running after their requisites of life.

Then comes the class of the poor and the disabled persons. It is absolutely necessary that they should be looked after, helped and well-provided for. The Merciful Allah has explained the ways and means of maintaining and providing for each of these classes. And everyone of this class has the right upon the ruler of the State that at least minimum necessities for its well-being and contented living are provided.

Remember, Maalik, that Almighty Allah will not absolve any ruler from his obligations unless he sincerely tries his best to discharge his duties, invokes Allah to help him in their performance, remains steadfast and diligent on the path of truth and justice and bears all this whether the performance of these duties is congenial or hateful to him.

So far as the army is concerned, its chief and commander should be a person who is most sincere and faithful to Allah, to the Holy Prophet (s) and to your Imam who is most pious, who is famous for his forbearance, clemency and gentleness, who is neither short-tempered nor does he get angry quickly, who sympathetically treats sincere excuses and accepts apologies, who is kind and compassionate with the weak, but severe against the strong and the powerful, who has no vindictiveness which might lead to violence or

any inferiority complex or weak-mindedness which makes them helpless and dejected. To find and select such persons you should have contacts with pious and noble families with high ideals and exalted traditions, families well-known for their bravery and courage and generosity and magnanimity. They are the people who may be considered as sources of magnificence and sublimity of character and fountain-heads of piety and good deeds.

When you have found and selected such persons then keep an eye over them and watch them as parents watch their children so that you may find out if there appears any change in their behaviour. Treat them kindly and sympathetically. Do not grudge highest considerations to them (if they rightly deserve) and do not refuse small mercies. This kind of treatment will create reciprocal tendencies in them and they will trust you and will be faithful to you. Under the impression that you have paid enough attention to their major necessities and wants, do not close your eyes to their minor requirements and needs because small favours often bear better fruits though careful attention to major necessities is very important. Among the military officers those should receive your highest respect and consideration who pay most attention to the needs of the soldiers under their command who come forward to help the soldiers with their personal means and property so that the soldiers may lead a happy and contented life and may have full confidence of the future of their families and children.

If the soldiers are thus satisfied and are free from anxieties and care then they will bravely and wholeheartedly face the conflicts. Your constant attention towards the officers and soldiers will make them love you more and more.

The thing which should most gladden the heart of a ruler is the fact that his State is being ruled on the principles of equity and justice and that his subjects love him. And your subjects will only love you when they have no grievance against you. Their sincerity and loyalty will be proved if they gather around you to support your government, when they accept your authority without considering it an unbearable burden on their heads and when they do not secretly wish your rule to come to an end. So let them have as many justifiable hopes in you as they can and fulfil as many as you reasonably can. Speak well of

those who deserve your praise. Appreciate the good deeds done by them and let these good actions be known publicly.

The correct and timely publicity of noble actions and golden deeds creates more zeal in the minds of the brave and emboldens the cowards and the weaklings. You must know and realize the good deeds done by every single individual so that the credit of noble deeds done by one may not be given to another. Do not underestimate and underpay the good work done. Similarly do not overpay a work simply because it has been done by a very important person and do not let his position and prestige be the cause of overvaluation of the merit of his work and at the same time do not undervalue a great deed if it is done by a very ordinary person or a commoner. Let equity, justice and fairplay be your motto.

When you are faced with problems which you cannot solve or with a difficult situation from which you cannot escape or when uncertain and doubtful circumstances confuse and perplex you, then turn to Allah and the Holy Prophet (s) because Allah has thus ordered those whom He wants to guide. The way to turn to Allah is to act diligently according to the clear and explicit orders given in His Holy Book and to the turn to the Holy Prophet (s) means to follow those of his orders about which there is no doubt and ambiguity and which have been generally accepted to be correctly recorded.

So far as dispensing of justice is concerned, you have to be very careful in selecting officers for the same. You must select people of excellent character and high calibre and with meritorious records. They must possess the following qualifications: Abundance of litigations and complexity of cases should not make them lose their temper.

When they realize that they have committed a mistake in judgement, they should not insist on it by trying to justify it. When truth is made clear to them or when the right path opens up before them, they should not consider it below their dignity to correct the mistake made or to undo the wrong done by them. They should not be corrupt, covetous or greedy. They should not be satisfied with ordinary enquiry or scrutiny of a case, but should scrupulously go through all the pros and cons, they must examine every aspect of the problem carefully, and whenever and wherever they find doubtful and

ambiguous points, they must stop, go through further details, clear the points, and only then proceed with their decisions. They must attach the greatest importance to reasoning, arguments and proofs. They should not get tired of lengthy discussions and arguments. They must exhibit patience and perseverance in scanning the details, in testing the points presented as true, in sifting facts from fiction and when truth is revealed to them they must pass their judgements without fear, favour or prejudice.

They should not develop vanity and conceit when compliments and praises are showered upon them. They should not be misled by flattery and cajolery. But, unfortunately, they are few persons having such characteristics. After you have selected such men to act as your judges, make it a point to go through some of their judgements and to check their proceedings. Pay them handsomely so that their needs are fully satisfied and they are not required to beg or borrow or resort to corruption. Give them such a prestige and position in your State that none of your courtiers or officers can overlord them or bring harm to them. Let judiciary be above every kind of executive pressure or influence, above fear or favour, intrigue or corruption. Take every particular care of this aspect because before your appointment this State was under the sway of corrupt, time-serving and wealth-grasping opportunists who were lewd, greedy and vicious and who wanted nothing out of a State but a sinful consent of amassing wealth and pleasures for themselves.

Then comes the officers of your State. You must supervise their work. They must be appointed after a careful scrutiny of their capabilities and characters. These appointments must be made originally on probation without any kind of favouritism being shown or influence being accepted; otherwise tyranny, corruption and misrule will reign in your State. While selecting your officers take care to select experienced and honourable persons, members of respectable families who had served Islam during its early days because these are usually of noble character and good repute. They are not greedy and cannot be easily bribed. They mostly have before them the ultimate result of their thoughts and their deeds. Keep them also well-paid so that they may not be tempted to lower their standard of morality and may not misappropriate the cash of the State which they hold in their trust and if after being paid handsomely they prove dishonest, then

you will be right to punish them. Therefore keep a careful watch over their system of work and rule.

You may also appoint trustworthy and honest men to keep a watch over the activities of these officers. The knowledge that they are being watched secretly will keep them away from dishonesty, misrule, malpractice and tyrannizing the subjects. Protect your government from dishonest officers. If you find any of them dishonest and your confidential intelligence service submits acceptable proofs of his dishonesty, then you must punish him. This may be corporal punishment besides dismissal from service and taking back from him all which he has dishonestly collected. He must be humiliated and must be made to realize the infamy of his wicked deeds. His humiliation and punishment must be given publicly so that it may serve as a lesson and a deterrent to others.

So far as collection of land revenues and taxes are concerned you must always keep in view the welfare of the tax-payers which is of primary importance than the taxes themselves because these taxes and the tax-payers are the original sources on which the welfare of your State and its subjects depend.

A State really lives upon the revenues collected from the tax-payers. Therefore, more importance should be attached to the fertility of land than to the collection of taxes because actual taxable capacity of people rests upon the fertility of the land. The ruler, who does not pay attention to the prosperity of his subjects and fertility of the land but concentrates only on collection of revenues, lays waste the land and consequently ruins the State and brings destruction to the creatures of Allah, his rule cannot last for long.

If the tax-payers complain to you of the heavy incidence to taxation, of any accidental calamity, of the vagaries of the monsoons, of the recession of the means of irrigation, of floods or destruction of their crops on account of excessive rainfall and if their complaints are true, then reduce their taxes. This reduction should be such that it provides them opportunities to improve their conditions and eases them of their troubles.

Decrease in State-income due to such reasons should not depress you because the best investment for a ruler is to help his subjects at the

time of their difficulties. They are the real wealth of a country and any investment on them even in the form of reduction of taxes, will be returned to the State in the shape of the prosperity of its cities and improvement of the country at large. At the same time you will be in a position to command and secure their love, respect and praises along with the revenues. Will that not be a lasting happiness?

Not only this, but your benign rule and humane treatment will so affect them that they will come to your help at the time of your difficulties and you will be able to rely on their support. Your kindness, your clemency and your justice will be a kind of moral training to them, and the contented, happy and prosperous life, for which they will be grateful to you, will be the best support, strongest protection and the greatest treasury for you.

Later if such circumstances arrive that you find yourself in need of their support, their help, their confidence, their wealth and their man-power, then they will have no grudge against you.

Remember, Maalik! If a country is prosperous and if its people are well-to-do, then it will happily and willingly bear any burden.

The poverty of the people is the actual cause of the devastation and ruination of a country and the main cause of the poverty of the people is the desire of its ruler and officers to amass wealth and possessions whether by fair or foul means. They are afraid of losing their posts or positions and sway or rule and want to make the most during the shortest time at their disposal. They never learn any lesson from the history of nations and never pay any attention to the commands of Allah.

You will also have to be very careful about your secretaries. You should entrust your work only to those who are the best among them.

Specially the affairs which are of confidential nature and which deal with secrets, and the security of the State should be entrusted only to men of noble character because men who are intoxicated with power, position and prestige carry on propaganda and speak against the government in public, they openly misbehave with you and consider themselves so important as to ignore you or your orders in financial transactions essential to the State, they avoid placing necessary papers before you or attending to important correspondence.

Particular care should be taken that when the officers make contracts on behalf of the government or sign agreements, these contracts and agreements are not defective or harmful to the State, if they are negotiating any treaties and alliances they do not overlook or forsake the interests of the State or if they find the State in a weak and embarrassing position on account of unfavourable terms of treaties or due to intrigues, they should be able to find sensible ways out of them. See that they know and realize their proper place and rank, because he who does not realize his place and position will never understand those of others.

One more thing about these officers: You must remember not to select them for very important posts and not to trust them completely simply because you have found them honest, diligent, trustworthy and intelligent and have formed a good opinion about them because there are some people who, when it suits them, pretend honesty, diligence and fidelity and can put on the garb of piety and virtue and thus find their ways in the hearts of the rulers, though actually they are neither honest nor diligent nor wise nor sagacious. Therefore, you must always look to the record or reputation of the services of such men during previous regimes; more importance should be attached to their good reputation. This kind of selection and supervision will prove that you are faithful to Allah and that you wish your Imam well.

Thus you must appoint one officer as the Head of each important branch of your government. He should have knowledge and wisdom enough to cope successfully with all the intricate problems of his department and should be diligent enough to cope with extensive work.

Remember well that if there is any defect in your officers and you are tolerating it, then you and only you are responsible for all those evils.

I want to advise you about your businessmen and industrialists. Treat them well, and order your officers to follow the same policy.

There may be local businessmen carrying on their trade in certain places or those who send their merchandise from one place to another. There may even be those who import and export goods. Similarly, there may be industrialists and manufacturers as well as industrial labour or men engaged in the handicrafts. They all deserve

sympathy, protection and good treatment.

They all are the sources of wealth to the country. They provide goods for the consumers. Most of these traders carry and convey these goods from across deserts, seas and over open lands and mountains, their consignments are brought from distant lands, often from places which are not easy to approach and where usually people do not care or do not dare to go. These businessmen are usually peace-loving people, not given to mischievous disturbances and seditious fomentation. You must look after their interest and protect them whether they are trading in your cities or towns or whether they are travelling over the countries carrying goods from place to place.

One more thing about these traders and industrialists. While treating them most sympathetically you must keep an eye over there activities as well.

You know they are usually stingy misers, intensely self-centred and selfish, suffering from the obsession of grasping and accumulating wealth.

They often hoard their goods to get more profit out of them by creating scarcity and by indulging in black-marketing. Such a condition is extremely injurious to the public on the one hand and disgraceful to the ruler on the other.

You must put a stop to all such practices because the Holy Prophet (s) has explicitly prohibited such practices. Remember that trade should go on between the buyers and sellers according to correct measures and weights and on such reasonable terms that neither the consumers nor the suppliers should have to face losses. But even with all the sympathetic treatments accorded to them and with all the facilities provided to them, if the traders and industrialists carry on hoarding and black-marketing, then you must punish them according to the intensity of their crime.

Then I want to caution you about the poor. Fear Allah about their conditions and your attitude towards them. They have no support, no resources and no opportunities. They are poor, they are destitute and many of them are cripples and unfit for work. Some of them come out begging and some (who maintain self-respect) do not beg, but their conditions speak of their distress, poverty, destitution and wants. For

the sake of Allah, Maalik, protect them and their rights. He has laid the responsibility of this upon your shoulders. You must fix a share for them from Baytul Mal (the Government Treasury). Besides this reservation in cash, you must also reserve a share in kind of crops etc. from government granaries in cities where food-grains are stored as are cultivated on State-owned land because in these storage the share of those living far away from any particular city is equal to the share of those living nearby.

Let me remind you once again that you are made responsible for guarding the rights of the poor people and for looking after their welfare. Take care that the conceit of your position and vanity of wealth may not deceive you to lose sight of such a grave and important responsibility. Yours is such an important post that you cannot claim immunity from the responsibility of even minor errors of commission or omission with an excuse that you were engrossed in the major problems of the State which you have solved diligently.

Therefore, be very careful of the welfare of the poor people. Do not be arrogant and vain against them. Remember that you have to take particular care of those who cannot reach you, whose poverty-stricken and disease-ridden sight may be hateful to you, and whom society treats with disgust, detestation and contempt. You should be a source of comfort, love and respect to them. Appoint a respectable, honest and pious person - a person who fears Allah and who can treat them honourably, order him to find out everything about them and to submit a report to you.

Then treat these poor people in such a way that on the Day of Judgement you can plead your case successfully before Allah because of all classes of your subjects this class deserves more of your attention, sympathy and fair-deal.

Though everyone of these poor persons deserves your sympathy and you will have to do justice to His cause to achieve His favour, yet you should pay more attention to young orphans and old cripples. They neither have any support nor can they conveniently come out begging. They cannot reach you; therefore, you must reach them.

Remember that the fulfilment of this obligation and duty is considered as a tiresome burden by most of the rulers but to those who desire to

achieve His Blessings and to enter into His Realm, even this work seems light and congenial. They bear it happily, dutifully and sincerely. They find pleasures in it and they believe in the promise made by Allah.

Out of your hours of work, fix a time for the complainants and for those who want to approach you with their grievances. During this time you should do no other work but hear them and pay attention to their complaints and grievances. For this purpose you must arrange public audience for them during this audience, for the sake of Allah, treat them with kindness, courtesy and respect. Do not let your army and police be in the audience hall at such times so that those who have grievances against your regime may speak to you freely, unreservedly and without fear.

All this is a necessary factor of your rule because I have often heard the Holy Prophet (s) saying, "That nation or regime, where that rights of the depressed, destitute and suppressed are not guarded and where the mighty and powerful persons are not forced to accede these rights, cannot achieve salvation."You must remember that in those audiences the most common men will gather. Therefore, if you find them misbehaving, becoming unmannerly or if you feel that their talk is irrelevant, tolerate them; do not be rude and do not insult them, so that Allah may be kind and merciful to you and may reward you for obeying His commands explicitly. Treat them courteously, hear their grievances patiently and if you are forced to reject their demands then reject them in such a way that your rejection may please them as much as your grants.

Then there are certain duties which only you will have to perform and which none of your officers can carry out. Among them are replies to the letters of your commissioners and governors and are beyond the jurisdiction or preview of your secretaries. If you find that your officers are not attending as much to the complaints of the public as they should, then you should personally attend to them. You must finish a day's work on that day only because each day will bring its own special work for you. Reserve your best time for prayers to Allah, though every work of the State is the work of Allah, especially, if you are sincere and honest, and if your subjects are happy with your rule and are safe from your oppression.

Among those duties that you are to perform diligently must be your daily prayers. These should be offered sincerely and persistently. You must fix times for this during days and nights. You must tax your bodily strength for this duty though it may tire you. Your observance of prayers should be sincere and faultless and should neither be so long as to tire out those who follow you in these prayers nor so short as to be faulty and defective because amongst those who follow you during the prayers, there may be some sick persons, while others may have to attend to some important work. When the Holy Prophet (s) sent me to Yemen, I asked him how to lead the prayers. He advised me, "Offer prayers like a weak and old person and be kind to the faithful" (so that weak and old persons may follow your prayers easily and happily).

You must take care not to cut yourself off from the public. Do not place a curtain of false prestige between you and those over whom you rule. Such pretensions and show of pomp and pride are in reality manifestations of inferiority complex and vanity. The result of such an attitude is that you remain ignorant of the conditions of your subjects and of the actual cases of the events occurring in the State.

You will fail to realize comparative importance of events taking place and may attach great significance to minor events and may slip over important facts, similarly you may attach importance to mediocre or insignificant people and may ignore real men of consequence; and what is more, you may lose the power of distinction between good and bad and may take one for the other or hopelessly mix up the two. After all, a ruler is as much a human being as any other man and he may remain ignorant of facts of which his officers want to keep him in the dark (and on which the public may throw light). Thus truth may get mixed up with falsehood and may not be distinguished because there are no birthmarks on the forehead of truth that it may be easily differentiated from falsehood, one has to search for facts and sift realities from fictions, only then can one reach the truth. Think for yourself, there are only two categories of rulers and you may belong to one of them.

You may either be a pious, sincere and diligent ruler, doing the right thing at the right moment and following the principles of justice and equity and you may be protecting rights of others and doing your best

to fulfil your obligations, in that case why hide from the public, why draw a curtain around yourself! Or you may be a miser refusing to be generous to anyone, in that case people will gradually come to know of this trait of your character and will gradually give up asking for favours from you but do not overlook the fact that most of their demands will have nothing to do with your private purse, they will be about the rights of people, obligations of the State, complaints against the State, oppressions, and solicitations of justice, then why try to avoid hearing these requests!

You should never overlook the fact that around the rulers there usually are certain privileged persons (relatives and friends). They may often try to take advantage of their status and may resort to selfishness, intrigues, fraud, corruption and oppression. If you find such people around you then do away with them (however closely connected they may be with you), immediately bring an end to the scandal and clear your surroundings of all such moral and spiritual filth.

You must never give lands in permanent lease with all proprietary and ownership rights to your friends and relatives. You must never allow them to take possession of the source of water-supply or lands which have special utility for the communes. If they get possession of such holdings they will oppress others to derive undue benefits and thus gather all the fruits for themselves leaving for you a bad reputation in this world and punishment in the next.

Be fair in dispensing justice. Punish those who deserve punishment even though he may be your near relation or a close friend and even if such an action may give you pangs of sorrow and grief. Bear such a sorrow patiently and hope for Divine reward. I assure you this will bear good fruits.

If on account of your strict measures people get suspicious of your behaving like a tyrant and oppressor, then come out openly before them and explain to them the reasons of your actions and let them see the facts for themselves and realize the truth. This will give training to your mind, will be an act of kindness to the subjects and the confidence thus reposed in them will make them support justice and truth while you will achieve the end you have in view of obtaining their support in the cause of truth.

If your enemy invites you to a Peace Treaty that will be agreeable to Allah, then never refuse to accept such an offer because peace will bring rest and comfort to your armies, will relieve you of anxieties and worries, and will bring prosperity and affluence to your people. But even after such treaties be very careful of the enemies and do not place too much confidence in their promises because they often resort to Peace Treaty to deceive and delude you and take advantage of your negligence, carelessness and trust. At the same time be very careful, never break your promise with your enemy, never forsake the protection or support that you have offered to him, never go back upon your words, and never violate the terms of the treaty. You must even risk your life to fulfil the promises given and the terms settled because of all the obligations laid by Almighty Allah upon man (in respect to other men), there is none so important as to keep one's promises when made.

Though people may differ in their religions and ideologies and may have divergent views upon various problems of State, yet they all agree that promises when made, must be fulfilled. Even the heathens take care to keep the promises made among themselves because they have seen and realised the evil effects of breaking promises. Therefore, take very particular care of promises made, never go back upon the words given, never go into the offensive without previously challenging and giving an ultimatum. Deception and fraud even against your enemy is a deception against Allah and none but a wretched sinner would dare do that.

Allah has given promises and treaties the high rank of being messengers of peace and prosperity and through His Kindness and Mercy has made them a common desire (of keeping promises) in the minds of all men and a common requirement for all human beings. He has made them such a shelter and asylum that everybody desires to be under their protection.

Therefore, there should be no mental reservation, no fraud, no deception and no underlying meanings in between the lines when you make a promise or conclude a treaty. Do not use such words and phrases in your promises and treaties as have possibilities of being translated in more than one way or as may have various interpretations and many explanations, let there be no ambiguity in

them, and let them be clear, precise and to the point. And when once a treaty has been finally concluded, do not try to take advantage of any ambiguous word or phrase in it. If you find yourself in a critical situation on account of the treaty made in the cause of Allah, then try to face the situation and bear the consequences bravely and do not try to back out of the terms that account, because to face such perplexing situations as may gain His Rewards and Blessings is better than to break your promises on that account and earn that about which you feel nervous and for which you will have to answer Allah and which may bring down His Wrath upon you in this world and damnation in the next.

Beware of the sin of shedding blood without religious justification and sanction because there is nothing quicker to bring down the Wrath of Allah, to take away His Blessings, to make you more deserving of His Wrath and to reduce the span of your life than to shed innocent blood. On the Day of Judgement, Allah will first attend to sins of bloodshed carried out by man against man. Therefore, never try to strengthen your power, position and prestige by shedding innocent blood. Such murders instead of making your position strong will not only considerably weaken it but may also transfer your power totally, taking it away from you and entrusting it to somebody else.

If you have intentionally murdered a man then no excuse shall be acceptable to Allah or to me because punishment of such a crime is necessary.

And if you kill a man by mistake without any intention or motive of killing or while delivering legal penalties, your whip, sword or hand unintentionally and inadvertently deals a fatal blow because even a forcefully delivered slap or box on the ear may cause death, then do not, on account of your prestige and position, refuse paying the compensation to the heirs.

Beware and do not develop the trait of self-admiration and self-appreciation. Do not get conceited of the good points that you find in your good character or good deeds that you have done. Do not let flattery and cajolery make you vain and egoist. Remember that of all the cunning ruses of the devil to undo good deeds of the pious people and to affect their piety, flattery and false praises are the ones on which it relies the most.

Do not boast of the favours and kindnesses that you have done to your subjects and do not try to make them realise this, do not think too much of the good that you have done to them, and do not go back upon the promises made, all these three habits are very ugly features of one's character. The practice of boasting over the favours done undoes the good done, the habit of exaggerating and thinking very highly of our good actions will make us lose the guidance of Allah, and the habit of breaking one's promises is disliked both by Allah and by man. The Merciful Allah says, "It is most hateful in the sight of Allah, to say something and not to practice it." [Qur'an, 61:3].

Do not be hasty and do not precipitate your decisions and actions, when the time comes for an action to be done, or a decision to be taken, then do not be lazy and do not waste time and do not show weakness. When you do not find a true way to do the thing on hand, then do not persist on the wrong way and when find a correct solution, then do not be lethargic in adopting it.

In short, do everything at a proper time and in a proper way and keep everything in its proper place.

Do not reserve for yourself anything which is a common property of all and in which others have equal rights. Do not close your eyes from glaring malpractice of the officers, miscarriage of justice and misuse of rights because you will be held responsible for the wrong thus done to others. In the near future your wrong practices and maladministration will be exposed and you will be held responsible and punished for the wrong done to the helpless and oppressed people. Take care and keep control over you temper, your anger and your desire to be arrogant and vain. Take care of your hands when you are out to deliver punishment and of the sharpness of your tongue when you are saying harsh things. The best way to achieve this is not to be hasty in making remarks and to delay in delivering punishment so that you may keep your temper under control and are not overexcited.

And you cannot achieve this unless you constantly remember that you have to return to Allah and unless His fear overcomes every other sentiment.

You must always try to remember the good and useful things done in

the past, activities of a just and benign regime, good deeds done by it, good laws promulgated, instructions of the Holy Prophet (s), commands of Allah given in His Holy Book and things that you have seen me doing or have heard me saying. Follow the good actions and advice found therein. Similarly, follow carefully the pieces of advice contained in these orders. Through them I have tried to teach you all that can be taught about a good regime. I have done my duty towards you so that you may not go astray and your mind may not crave for base desires. If it does then you will have no excuse before Allah.

I beseech Allah that by His Limitless Mercy and by His Supreme Might He may grant our prayers, that He may lead both of us to the Divine Guidance of achieving His Pleasure, of successfully pleading our cases before Him, justifying our deeds before man, of gaining good repute, of leaving good results of our benign and just rule with ever expanding prosperity and ever increasing welfare of the State and of meeting our ends as martyrs and pious persons, as our return is towards Him only.

May the peace of Allah be upon the Holy Prophet (s) and His chosen descendants!

7. Worshipping and Religious Responsibilities

Imam ‘Ali (as) said:

Allah has placed on you some obligations which you should not ignore, and has laid down for you limits, which you should not transgress, and has prohibited you from certain things which you should not violate and has kept quiet about certain things, but He has not left them out by mistake so that you should not find them.

Imam ‘Ali (as) has said: *You have to remember each and everything that you will not be forgiven by ignoring it!*

The commander of the faithful paid much attention in explanation of some of the Islamic rules: *"Ask others to do good; you will thus be among the good doers. Desist others from evil with your action as well as your speech, and stay away, to the best of your ability, from he who commits it. Struggle for Allah as is His due; and the reviling of a reviler should not deter you in matters of Allah. Leap into danger for the sake of right wherever it may be."*

Amir al-mu'minin (as) said: *Allah has laid down iman (belief) for purification from polytheism; salat (prayer) for purification from vanity; zakat (levy) as a means of livelihood; siyam (fasting) as a trial of the people; hajj (pilgrimage to the House of Allah in Makkah) as a support for religion; jihad (fighting in the way of Allah) for the honour of Islam; persuasion for good (al-amr bi'l-ma`ruf) for the good of the common people; dissuasion from evil (an-nahy 'ani'l-munkar) for the control of the mischievous; regard for kinship for the increase of numbers; revenge for stoppage of bloodshed; the award of penalties for the realization of importance of the prohibitions; the abstinence from drinkingwine for protection of the wit; the avoidance of theft for inculcating chastity; abstinence from adultery for safeguarding descent; abstinence from sodomy for the increase of progeny; tendering evidence for furnishing proof against contentions; abstinence from the lies for increasing esteem for truth; maintenance of peace (salam) for protection from danger; imamah or Imamate (Divine Leadership) for the orderliness of the community and obedience (to Imams) as a mark of respect to the Imamate.*

Then he added: '*Zakat, jihad, fasting and the pilgrimage to the Ka'bah are saving from hell fire.'*

He has also said added:*Promote good, so you will be one of its doers, and stand against evil with words, or by acting against it, and make yourself distinguished from those who are doing it! The high goal of the religion is to promote good and prohibit evil, and punishing the transgressors. Fighting the enemies of faith is the fundamental pillar of faith, and the path of blissful individuals, so anyone who struggles against evil to bring things back to justice, he will succeed. The fighters for the sake of Almighty Allah (swt) will be welcomed by widely opened gates of heaven, as Jihad is awarded with the peak of divine rewards.*

8. Morals and Training

Imam 'Ali (as) paid a special kind of attention towards the training of society. He tried to remove the moral deviations of the people. The Prophet (sawas) had pointed towards the real problem and said:

'Indeed, being devoted to this worldly life is the key to each and every sin.'

Thus we see that the Prophet (sawas) has mentioned the real cause of greed for the world by the previous saying.

Let us not forget that it was at a time when Imam 'Ali (as) unveiled the conspiracies which were made against the laws of the Prophet (sawas) to keep safe some of the policies of the caliphs. Imam 'Ali (as) explained for the people the reason of looting the government by others. For this he said lots of traditions related to the Prophet (sawas) as the last proof for the people of his time. Unfortunately they have ignored all of those prophetic narrations. Indeed:

'*They have heard everything from him and grasped it properly, but the temptation of this worldly life and being controlled by its love has rendered their sight to become blind, and bitterness become sweet for them.'*

When a person is involved in love for the world, he tries to reach it by any means. Then he tries to snatch what other people want. The reason behind his action is that love for anything makes a person blind and he cannot hear or see anything. That is why the caliphs gave lots of explanations to show their ability for caliphate; they also brought lots of pretexts, which could not be enough for Imam's (as) good reasoning. However, they did not leave their position against Imam 'Ali (as) which was always condemned by him.

Whenever someone asked Imam 'Ali (as) for a good cure for the removal of the reasons which caused deviation, Imam 'Ali (as) mentioned it in the bestpossible manner in his sermon to Hamam; unveiling the secret that gave the pious people such greatness. Imam 'Ali (as) said: '*The Creator became greater in their eyes, therefore everything decreased in their sight.'*

Therefore, when a person comes to know the greatness of his Lord, at the same time the world seems something very mean and cheap to him as compared with the greatness of Allah. When the world seems a cheap thing to him, then he does not think of it any more while performing his actions and activities. He does not conspire

and endanger himself in order to get to it, but rather, shows no love for it, like 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib (as). When the Quraysh snatched the caliphate which was Imam's (as) right, he neglected it and said:

'It was like a competition, thus some groups of people were stingy, and had struggled to grab it, while other generous individuals were abstinent. Indeed Almighty Allah (swt) is the final Judge during the Day of Judgment.'

It was the time when two kinds of different morals came into being in Islamic society: one was the extraordinary morals of Imam 'Ali (as) who rejected politics (necessity is the mother of invention), while the second morals were related to the caliphs who used every possible means to reach the caliphate. That is why 'Ali (as) did not show any kind of inclination towards the caliphate while the others tried their level best to reach it by any means.

9. Imam Ali's (as) Prayers

The holy Qur'an was the first book which opened the gate for prayers and said to the Prophet (sawas): If you invoke them they will not hear your invocation, and even if they heard they cannot respond to you, and on the of Day of Resurrection they will forswear your polytheism, and none can inform you like the One who is all-aware. Imam 'Ali (as) also paid much attention towards prayers like other Imams (as). The prayers of Imam 'Ali (as) have been compiled in a book named "Sahifah Alawiyyah". Among the most famous prayers of his are "the prayer of Kumayl", "the prayer of Sabah" and "incantation of Shabaniyah". Here we will mention some parts of his poetic prayers:

1. Dua'a Kumayl –Taughtby Imam 'Ali (as)

In the Name of Allah, the All-merciful, the All-compassionate

O Allah! Bless Muhammad and his progeny.

O Allah! I beseech Thee by Thy mercy which encompasses all things and by Thy power by which Thou overcometh all things and submit to it all things and humble before it all things and by Thy might by which Thou hast conquered all things and by Thy majesty against which nothing can stand up.

And by Thy grandeur which prevails upon all things,and by Thy authority which is exercised over all things,and by Thy own self that shall endure forever after all things have vanished,and by Thy Names which manifest Thy power over all things,and by Thy knowledge which pervades all things,and by the light of Thy countenance which illuminates everything, O Thou who art the light!

O Thou who art the most holy! O Thou who existed before the foremost! O Thou who shall exist after the last!

O Allah! Forgive me my sins such as would affront my continency. O Allah! Forgive me my sins such as would bring down calamity.

O Allah! Forgive me such sins of mine as would change divine favours (into disfavours). O Allah! Forgive me my such sins as would hinder my supplication. O Allah! Forgive me such sins as to bring down misfortunes (or afflictions). O Allah! Forgive my such sins as would suppress hope.

O Allah! Forgive every sin that I have committed and every error that I have erred. O Allah! I endeavour to draw myself nigh to Thee through Thy invocation,and I pray to Thee to intercede on my behalf,and I entreat Thee by Thy benevolence to draw me nearer to Thee,and grant me that I should be grateful to Thee and inspire me to remember and to invoke Thee.

O Allah! I entreat Thee begging Thee submissively, humbly and awestricken to treat me with clemency and mercy and to make me pleased and contented with what Thou hast allotted to me,and cause me to be modest and unassuming in all circumstances.

O Allah! I beg Thee as one who is passing through extreme privation and who supplicates his needs to Thee and his hope has been greatly raised by that which is with Thee.

O Allah! Great is Thykingdomand exalted is Thy greatness. Thy plan is secret, Thy authority is manifest, Thy might is victorious and subduing and Thy power is prevalent throughout and it is not possible to escape from Thy dominion.

O Allah! Except Thee I do not find any one able to pardon my sins nor to conceal my loathsome acts. Nor have I any one except Thee to change my evil deeds into virtues. There is no god but Thou glory and

praise be to Thee I have made my own soul to suffer. I had the audacity (to sin) by my ignorance relying upon my past remembrance of Thee and Thy grace towards me.

O Allah! My Lord! How many of my loathsome acts hast Thou screened (from public gaze). How many of my grievous afflictions (distresses) hast Thou reduced in severity,and how many of my stumblings hast Thou protected, how many of my detestable acts has Thou averted, and how many of my undeserving praises hast Thou spread abroad!

O Allah! My trials and sufferings have increased and my evilness has worsened, my good deeds have diminished and my yokes (of misdeeds) have become firm.and remote hopes restrain me to profit (by good deeds) and the world has deceived me with its allurements and my own self has been affected by treachery and procrastination.

Therefore, my Lord! I implore Thee by Thy greatness not to let my sins and my misdeeds shut out access to my prayers from reaching Thy realm and not to disgrace me by exposing those (hidden ones) of which Thou hast knowledge nor to hasten my retribution for those vices and misdeeds committed by me in secret which were due to evil mindedness, ignorance, excessive lustfulness and my negligence.

O Allah! I beg Thee by Thy greatness to be compassionate to me in all circumstances and well disposed towards me in all matters. My God! My Nourisher! Have I anyone except Thee from whom I can seek the dislodging of my evils and understanding of my problems?

My God! My Master! Thou decreed a law for me but instead I obeyed my own low desires And I did not guard myself against the allurements of my enemy He deceived me with vain hopes whereby I was led astray and fate helped him in that respect. Thus I transgressed some of its limits set for me by Thee and I disobeyed some of Thy commandments.

Thou hast therefore a (just) cause against me in all those matters and I have no plea against Thy judgement passed against me. I have therefore become (justifiably) liable to Thy judgement and afflictions.

But now I have turned Thee, my Lord, after being guilty of omissions and transgressions against my soul, apologetically, repentantly,

broken heartedly, entreating earnestly for forgiveness, yieldingly confessing (to my guilt) as I can find no escape from that which was done by me and having no refuge to which I could turn except seeking Thy acceptance of my excuse and admitting me into the realm of Thy capacious mercy.

O Allah! Accept my apology and have pity on my intense sufferings and set me free from my heavy fetters (of evil deeds). My Nourisher! Have mercy on the infirmity of my body, the delicacy of my skin and the brittleness of my bones.

O' Thou!Who originated my creation and (accorded me) my individuality, and (ensured) my upbringing and welfare (and provided), my sustenance (I beg Thee) to restore Thy favours and blessings upon me as Thou didst in the beginning of my life.

O' my God! My master! My Lord! And my Nourisher! What! Wilt Thou see me punished with the fire kindled by Thee despite my belief in Thy unity?

And despite the fact that my heart has been filled with (pure) knowledge of Thee and when my tongue has repeatedly praised Thee and my conscience has acknowledged Thy love and despite my sincere confessions (of my sins) and my humble entreaties submissively made to Thy divinity?

Nay, Thou art far too kind and generous to destroy one whom thyself nourished and supported, or to drive away from Thyself one whom Thou has kept under Thy protection, or to scare away one whom Thy self hast given shelter, or to abandon in affliction one Thou hast maintained and to whom Thou hast been merciful.

I wish I had known o' my Master, my God and my Lord! Wilt Thou inflict fire upon faces which have submissively bowed in prostration to Thy greatness, or upon the tongues which have sincerely confirmed Thy unity and have always expressed gratitude to Thee, or upon hearts which have acknowledged Thy divinity with conviction, or upon the minds which accumulated so much knowledge of Thee until they became submissive to Thee, or upon the limbs which strove, at the places appointed for Thy worship, to adore Thee willingly and seek Thy forgiveness submissively?

Such sort (of harshness) is not expected from Thee as it is remote from Thy grace, o' generous one! O' Lord! Thou art aware of my weakness to bear even a minor affliction of this world and its consequence and adversity affecting the denizens of this earth, although such afflictions are momentary, short-lived and transient.

How then can I bear the retributions and the punishments of the hereafter, which are enormous and of intensive sufferings, of prolonged periods and perpetual duration, and which shall never be alleviated for those who deserve the same as those retributions will be the result of Thy wrath; and Thy punishment which neither the heavens nor the earth can withstand and bear! My Lord!

How can I, a weak, insignificant, humble, poor and destitute creature of Thine be able to bear them?

O' my God! My Lord! My King! And Master! Which of the matters shall I complain to Thee and for which of them shall I bewail and weep? Shall I bewail for the pains and pangs of the punishment and their intensity or for the length of sufferings and their duration?

Therefore (my Lord!) if Thou wilt subject me to the penalties (of hell) in company of Thy enemies and cast me with those who merited Thy punishments and tear me apart from Thy friends and those who will be near to Thee, then my God, my Lord and my Master, though I may patiently bear Thy punishments, how can I calmly accept being kept away from Thee?

I reckon that though I may patiently endure the scorching fire of Thy hell, yet how can I resign myself to the denial of Thy pity and clemency? How can I remain in the fire while I have hopes of Thy forgiveness?

O' my Lord! By Thy honour truly do I swear that, if Thou wilt allow my power of speech to be retained by me in the hell, I shall amongst its inmates cry out bewailingly unto Thee, like the cry of those who have faith in Thy kindness and compassion And I shall bemoan for Thee (for being deprived of nearness to Thee) the lamentation of those who are bereaved, and I shall keep on calling unto Thee: "Where art Thou o' Friend of the believers! O' (Thou who art) the last hope and resort of those who acknowledge Thee and have faith in Thy clemency and kindness; o' Thou who art the helper of those seeking

help! O' Thou who art dear to the hearts of those who truly believe in Thee! And o' Thou who art the Lord of the universe."

My Lord! Glory and praise be to Thee, wouldst Thou (wish) to be seen (disregarding) the voice of a Muslim bondman, incarcerated therein (the hell) for his disobedience and imprisoned within its pits for his evildoings and misdeeds, crying out to Thee the utterance of one who has faith in Thy mercy and calling out to Thee in the language of those who believe in Thy unity and seeking to approach Thee by means of Thy epithet "the Creator, the Nourisher, the Accomplisher and the Protector of the entire existence?"

My Lord! Then how could he remain in torments, when he hopefully relies upon Thy past forbearance, compassion and mercy?

And how can the fire cause him suffering, when he hopes for Thy grace and mercy and how can its roaring flames char him, when Thou hearest his voice and sees his plight? And how can he withstand its roaring flames, when Thou knowest his frailty? And how can he be tossed about between its layers, when Thou knowest his sincerity?

And how can the guards of hell threaten him, when he calls out to Thee? "My Lord", and how would Thou abandon him therein (the hell), when he has faith in Thy grace to set him free?

Alas! That is not the concept (held by us) of Thee, nor has Thy grace such a reputation, nor does it resemble that which Thou hast awarded by Thy kindness and generosity to those who believe in Thy unity. I definitely conclude that hadst Thou not ordained punishment for those who disbelieved in Thee, and hadst Thou not decreed Thy enemies to remain in hell,

Thou wouldst have made the hell cold and peaceful and there would never have been an abode or place for any one in it; but sanctified be Thy Names, Thou hast sworn to fill the hell with the disbelievers from amongst the jinns and mankind together and to place forever Thy enemies therein. And Thou, exalted be Thy praises, hadst made manifest, out of Thy generosity and kindness that a believer is not like unto him who is an evil-doer.

My Lord! My Master! I, therefore implore Thee by that power, which Thou determineth and by the decree which Thou hast finalised and

ordained whereby Thou hath prevailed upon whom.

Thou hast imposed it, to bestow upon me this night and this very hour the forgiveness for all the transgressions that I have been guilty of, for all the sins that I have committed, for all the loathsome acts that I have kept secret and for all the evils done by me, secretly or openly, in concealment or outwardly and for every evil action that Thou hast ordered the two noble scribes to confirm, whom Thou hast appointed to record all my actions and to be witnesses over me along with the limbs of my body, whilst Thou observeth over me besides them and was witness to those acts concealed from them?

Which Thou in Thy mercy hast kept secret and through Thy kindness unexposed and I pray to Thee to make my share plentiful in all the good that Thou dost bestow; in all the favours that Thou dost grant; and in all the virtues that Thou dost allow to be known everywhere; and in all the sustenance and livelihood that Thou dost expand and in respect of all the sins that Thou dost forgive and the wrongs that Thou dost cover up O' Lord! O' Lord! O' Lord!

O' my God! My Lord! My King! O' Master of my freedom! O' Thou who holdeth my destiny and who art aware of my suffering and poverty.

O' Thou who knoweth my destitution and starvation, o' my Lord! O' Lord, o' Lord! I beseech Thee by Thy glory and Thy honour, by Thy supremely high attributes and by Thy names to cause me to utilise my time, day and night, in Thy remembrance, by engaging myself in serving Thee (Thy cause) and to let my deeds be such as to be acceptable to Thee, so much so that all my actions and offerings (prayers) may be transformed into one continuous and sustained effort and my life may take the form of constant and perpetual service to Thee.

O' my Master! O' Thou upon Whom I rely! O' Thou unto Whom I express my distress!

O' my Lord! My Lord! My Lord! Strengthen my limbs for Thy service and sustain the strength of my hands to persevere in Thy service and bestow upon me the eagerness to fear Thee and constantly to serve Thee.

So that I may lead myself towards Thee in the field with the vanguards, who are in the fore rank, and be swift towards Thee among those who hasten towards Thee, and urge eagerly to be near Thee and draw myself towards Thee, like them who sincerely draw themselves towards Thee and to fear Thee like the fear of those who believe firmly in Thee and thus I may join the congregation of the faithful congregated near Thee (for protection).

O' Allah! Whosoever intendeth evil against me, let ill befall on him and frustrate him who plots against me and assign for me a place in Thy presence with the best of Thy bondsmen and nearer abode to Thee, for verily that position cannot be attained except through Thy grace and treat me benevolently, and through Thy greatness extendThy munificence towards me and through Thy mercy protect me and cause my tongue to accentuate Thy remembrance and my heart filled with Thy love and be liberal to me by Thy gracious response and cause my evils to appear fewer and forgive me my errors.

For verily, Thou hast ordained for Thy bondsmen Thy worship and bidden them to supplicate unto Thee and hast assured them (of Thy) response

So, my Lord! I look earnestly towards Thee and towards Thee, my Lord! I have stretched forth my hands therefore, by Thy honour, respond to my supplication and let me attain my wishes and, by Thy bounty, frustrate not my hopes and protect me from the evils of my enemies, from among the jinns and mankind o' Thou! Who is readily pleased, forgive one who owns nothing but supplication for Thou doest what Thou willest o, Thou!

Whose Name is the remedy (for all ills) and Whose remembrance is a sure cure for all ailments and obedience to Whom makes one self sufficient; have mercy on one whose only asset is hope and whose only armour is lamentation O' Thou! Who perfecteth all bounties and Who wardeth off all misfortunes!

O, Light! Who illuminateth those who are in bewilderment! O, Omniscient! Who knoweth without (acquisition of) learning! Bless Muhammad and the Descendants of Muhammad and do unto me in accordance with that which befitteth Thee, and deal with me not in

accordance to my worth. May the blessings of Allah be bestowed upon His Apostle and the Rightful Imams from his Descendants and His peace be upon them plentifully.

2. The Supplication of Morning –Taughtby Imam 'Ali (as)

In the Name of Allah, the most Beneficent, the most Merciful.

Oh God, Oh He who extended the morning's tongue in the speech of its dawning, dispatched the fragments of the dark night into the gloom of its stammering, made firm the structure of the turning spheres in the measures of its display and beamed forth the brightness of the sun through the light of its blazing! Oh He who demonstrates His Essence by His Essence, transcends congeneity with His creatures and is exalted beyond conformity with His qualities!

Oh He who is near to the passing thoughts of opinions, far from the regards of eyes and knows what will be before it comes to be! Oh He who has put me at ease in the cradle of His security and sanctuary, awakened me to the favours and kindness that He has bestowed upon me and held from the claws of evil with His hand and His force!

Bless, oh God, the guide to Thee in the darkest night, him who, of Thy ropes, clings to the cord of the longest nobility, him whose glory is evident at the summit of stout shoulders and whose feet were entrenched in spite of slippery places in ancient time; and [bless] his household, the good, the chosen, the pious.

And open for us, oh God, the leaves of morning's door with the keys of mercy and prosperity! Clothe me, oh God, with the most excellent robes of guidance and righteousness!

Plant, oh God, through Thy tremendousness, the springs of humility in the watering place of my heart! Cause to flow, oh God, because of Thy awesomeness, tears of moaning from the corner of my eyes! And chastise, oh God, the recklessness of my clumsiness with the reins of contentment! My God, if mercy from Thee does not begin with fair success for me, then who can take me to Thee upon the evident path?

If Thy deliberateness would turn me over to the guide of hope and wishes, then who will annul my slips from the stumbles of caprice? If Thy deliberateness should turn me over to the guide of hope and

wishes, then who will annul my slips from the stumbles of caprice? If Thy help should forsake me in the battle with the soul and Satan, then Thy forsaking will have entrusted me to where there is hardship and deprivation. My God, dost Thou see that I have only come to Thee from the direction of hopes or clung to the ends of Thy cords when my sins have driven me from the house of union?

So what an evil mount upon which my soul has mounted - its caprice! Woe upon it for being seduced by its own opinions and wishes! And destruction be upon it for its audacity toward its Master and Protector! My God, I have knocked upon the door of Thy mercy with the hand of my hope, fled to Thee seeking refuge from my excessive caprice and fixed the fingers of my love to the ends of Thy cords.

So pardon, oh God, the slips and errors I have committed and release me from the foot-tangling of my robe. For Thou art my Master, my Protector, my Support and my Hope and Thou art the object of my search and my desire in my ultimate end and stable abode. My God, how couldst Thou drive away a poor beggar who seeks refuge in Thee from sins, fleeing? Or how couldst Thou disappoint one seeking guidance who repairs to Thy threshold, running?

Never! For Thy pools are full in the hardship of drought, Thy door is open for seeking and penetration and Thou art the goal of requests and the object of hopes. My God, these are the reins of my soul I have bound them with the ties of Thy will. These are the burdens of my sins I have averted them with Thy pardon and mercy. And these are my caprices that lead astray - I have entrusted them to the threshold of Thy gentleness and kindliness.

So make this morning of mine, oh God, descend upon me with the radiance of guidance, and with safety in religion and this world! And [make] my evening a shield against the deception of enemies and a protection against the destructive blows of caprice!

Verily Thou art able over what Thou wilt! Thou givest the kingdom to whom Thou wilt, and Thou seizest the kingdom from whom Thou wilt; Thou exaltest whom Thou wilt, and Thou abasest whom Thou wilt; in Thy hand is the good; Thou art powerful over all things. Thou makest the night to enter into the day, and Thou makest the day to enter into the night; Thou bringest forth the living from the dead, and Thou

bringest forth dead from the living; and Thou providest whomsoever Thou wilt without reckoning.

There is no god but Thou! Glory be to Thee, oh God, and Thine is the praise! Who knows Thy measure without fearing Thee? Who knows what Thou art without awe of Thee? Through Thy power Thou hast joined disparate things, through Thy gentleness Thou hast cleaved apart the daybreak and through Thy generosity Thou hast illumined the dark shrouds of night. Thou hast made waters, sweet and salt, flow forth from hard shining stones, sent down out of rain-clouds water cascading and appointed the sun and moon a blazing lamp for the creatures, without experiencing in that which Thou originated either weariness or effort.

So, oh He who is alone in might and subsistence and dominates His slaves with death and annihilation, Bless Muhammad and his household, the God-fearing, answer my supplication hear my call, destroy my enemies and actualize through Thy bounty my hope and desire.

Oh best of those who is called to remove affliction and object of hope in every difficulty and ease! I have stated my need, so do not reject me, oh my Master, despairing of Thy exalted gifts. Oh All-generous! Oh All-generous! Oh All-generous! By Thy mercy, oh Most Merciful of the merciful! And God bless the best of His creatures, Muhammad, and all his household!

Then he should prostrate and say:

My God, my heart is veiled, my soul deficient, my intelligence defeated, my caprice triumphant, my obedience little, my disobedience much and my tongue acknowledges sins. So what am I to do? Oh He who covers defects! Oh He who knows the unseen things! Forgive my sins, all of them, by the sacredness of Muhammad and the household of Muhammad! Oh All-forgiver! Oh All-forgiver! Oh All-forgiver! By Thy mercy, oh Most Merciful of the merciful.

3. The Invocation (Munajat) of Shabaniyah

It has been narrated by Ibn Khalawayh who commented on it, saying, "This is the prayer of Imam `Ali Amir al-Mu'mineen and the Holy Imams, his descendants, (as) who used to recite it in the month of

Sha`ban."It is one of the greatest supplications of the Ahlul Bait (as), and it can be credited as the peak of spiritual knowledge and wholehearted feeling of the unique existence of the Almighty (swt). The text is as follows:

'My Lord, bestow Your blessings on Muhammad and his descendants; respond to my prayer when I pray to You; listen to my call when I call You; and turn to me when I make my submission to You in confidence. I have come running to You and am standing before You imploring You in humility and hoping to get the reward You have for me. You know what is in my heart, and You are aware of what I need. You know my mind and are not unaware of my futureand of my present, of what I want to begin my speech with; of the request I would utter, and of the hopes I have in regard to my ultimate lot.

My Lord, whatever You have destined for me up to the end of my life, whether concerning the open aspect of my life or the hidden aspect of it, is bound to come. What is to my advantage and what is to my disadvantage - all my losses and gains are in Your hand, not in the hand of anybody else.

My Lord, if You deprive me, who else will provide me; and if You let me down, who else will help me?

My Lord, I seek Your protection from Your anger and from earning Your displeasure. If I am not fit for gaining Your Mercy, You are certainly fit to be generous to me by virtue of Your Magnanimity. My Lord, I see as if I am standing before You protected by my trust in You. You said what befitted You and covered me with Your forgiveness.

My Lord, if You forgive me, then who is more suited than You to do that? If the time of my death has come near and my deeds have not still brought me close to You, I make this confession of my sins a means of approaching You.

I have been unjust to my soul for I have not looked after it. It will certainly be doomed if You do not forgive it.

My Lord, You have always been kind to me during my lifetime. Therefore, do not cut off Your favour from me at the time of my death.

My Lord, how can I lose the hope of Your looking kindly in me after

my death, when you have always been good to me during my life.

My Lord, in my case do what befits You and bestow Your favour on me - a sinner enwrapped in his ignorance.

My Lord, You have concealed many of my sins in this world. I am in a greater need of their being conceded in the next. As You have not revealed my sins even to any of Your pious bondmen, do not expose me on the Day of Resurrection before everybody.

My Lord, Your generosity has expanded my aspiration, and Your forgiveness is superior to my deeds. Therefore gladden my heart by allowing me to meet You on the day You administer justice to Your bondmen.

My Lord, my apology to You is the apology of him who cannot afford his apology being not accepted. Therefore accept my apology, You the Most Magnanimous of those to whom the evildoers tender their apology.

My Lord, do not turn down my request; do not foil my desire; and do not cut off my hope and expectation of You.

My Lord, if You had wanted to disgrace me, You would not have guided me; and if You had wanted to expose my faults and vices, You would not have kept me safe and sound.

My Lord, I do not think that You will turn down my request for that in asking You for which I have spent my whole life.

My Lord, all praise is due to You, always and forever, growing not diminishing, as You like and please.

My Lord, if You condemn me for my crimes, I will cling to Your forgiveness, and if You hold me for my sins, I will cling to Your granting pardon. If You haul me into the hell, I will tell its inmates that I love You.

My Lord, if my deeds are too small in relation to how I should obey You, my aspirations are high enough as compared to what I should expect of You.

My Lord, how can I go away from You unsuccessful and disappointed, when I had a high hope that You will be kind enough to send me away enjoying safety and deliverance.

My Lord, I have wasted my life committing the crime of forgetting You and played havoc with my youth, intoxicated with keeping myself away from You.

My Lord, I did not wake up when I was under a delusion about You and was inclined to earn Your displeasure.

My Lord, I am Your bondman, son of Your bondman. I am standing before You, trying to use Your own magnanimity as a means of approaching You.

My Lord, I am a bondman of Yours, I want to rid myself of the sins I used to commit in Your presence because I lacked the sense of feeling ashamed that You were looking at me. I request You to forgive me, because forgiveness is a characteristic of Your Kindness.

My Lord, I was not strong enough to move away from Your disobedience, except when You awakened me to Your love. I was exactly as You wanted me to be. I am thankful to You for introducing me to Your Kindness and purging my heart of the impurities of being inattentive to You.

My Lord, look upon me as the person whom You called and he responded to You, whom You helped by using his services, and he obeyed You. You Near One, Who is not far from one who is away from You. You Munificent, Who does not withhold His reward from one who hopes for it.

My Lord, provide me with a heart, the passion of which may bring it near You, with a tongue the truth of which may be submitted to You, and with a vision the nature of which may bring it close to You.

My Lord, whoever gets acquainted with You, is not unknown; whoever takes shelter under You, is not disappointed; and one to whom You turn, is not a slave. One who follows Your path is enlightened; and one who takes refuge in You, is saved.

My Lord, I have taken refuge in You. Therefore do not disappoint me of Your Mercy and do not keep me secluded from Your Kindness.

My Lord, place me among Your friends in the position of one who hopes for an increase in Your love.

My Lord, inspire me with a passionate love of remembering You so

that I may keep on remembering You, and by Your Holy Name and Pure Position cherish my cheerful determination into a success.

My Lord, I invoke You to admit me to the place reserved for those who obey You, and to attach me to the nice abode of those who enjoy Your good pleasure... I can neither defend myself nor do I control what is advantageous for me.

My Lord, I am Your powerless, sinning slave and Your repentant bondman. So do not make me one of those from whom You turn away Your face, and whom his negligence has secluded from Your forgiveness.

My Lord, grant me complete severance of my relations with everything else and total submission to You. Enlighten the eyes of our hearts with the light of their looking at You to the extent that they penetrate the veils of light and reach the Source of Grandeur, and let our souls get suspended by the glory of Your sanctity.

My Lord, make me one of those whom You call and they respond; when You look at and they are thunderstruck by Your majesty. You whisper to them secretly and they work for You openly.

My Lord, I have not allowed my pessimistic despair to overcome my good opinion about You, nor did I ever lose my hope of Your benevolence.

My Lord, if my errors have degraded me with You, You may forgive me in view of my unqualified reliance on You.

My Lord, if my sins have made me unfit to receive Your tender affection, my firm belief has reminded me of Your Compassion.

My Lord, if my disregard for preparations to meet You has put me to sleep, my knowledge of Your kind bounties has awakened me.

My Lord, if Your severe punishment calls me to Hell, the abundance of Your reward invites me to Paradise.

My Lord, I ask You and pray to You earnestly, I desire and request You to show Your favour to Muhammad and his descendants, make me one of those who always remember You and never violate the pledge they make to You, who do not fail to show You their gratitude and do not take Your orders lightly.

My Lord, let me be attached to the Light of Your Majestic Glory, so that I may know You alone, be away from others, and have a heart fearful of You and an eye watchful of You. May Allah's blessing and peace be on Muhammad and those of his descendants who are pure.'

4. An Invocation in Verse Munajat by Imam 'Ali (as)

Imam 'Ali (as) had eloquent whispering prayers, which reflected his elevated status of literature, being in the peak of eloquence. Here follows some pieces:

ForYouis all praise, O Possessor of Bounty, Glory and Eminence,
Glory be to You – You grant to whosoever You will, and withhold.
O Allah! My Creator, my Fortress, and my Refuge!
To You I resort, in hardship and in ease, for relief.
O Allah! Even if my mistakes have become grave and numerous,
Then Your Forgiveness is far greater (than those sins), and limitless.
O Allah! If I had given my soul all that it desired,
Then there I would be, lost in the land of regret!
O Allah! You see my position, my poverty and my destitution,
And You hear my softly whispered supplication,
O Allah! So sever not my hopes nor distract my heart (from You),
For I pine for the bounties of Your Generosity
O Allah! If You thwart me or chase me away,
Then who can I hope from, and who can I make intercede for me?
O Allah! Keep me from Your punishment, indeed I am
Captive, abased, fearful, and subservient to You.
O Allah! Let knowledge of the (ultimate) proofs accompany me
When my grave becomes my abode and home.
O Allah! Even if You punish me for a thousand years,
My hopes in You will nonetheless never be severed.
O Allah! Let me savour Your forgiveness on the day
When neither progeny nor wealth will be of any avail.

O Allah! If you do not forgive any but the doers of good,
Then who is there for the disobedient, who indulge in their desires?
O Allah! If you do not watch out for me, I will be lost!
But since You do watch over me, I am never lost.
O Allah! Even though I have been negligent in pursuing goodness,
I am now tracing and following the path to forgiveness.
O Allah! I may have sinned in ignorance, but I have also always
Hoped (for Your Grace), until others wondered if I ever worried (about rejection).
O Allah! My sins have become mountains or even higher,
But Your capacity for pardon is far greater and loftier.
O Allah! Remembrance of your might alleviates my sorrow,
While remembrance of my mistakes makes my eyes shed tears.
O Allah! Reduce my lapses and efface my sins,
For (here) I am confessing, fearful and beseeching.
O Allah! Grant me peace from You, and tranquility
For I knock but at the gates of Your mercy.
O Allah! If you distance me from Yourself or debase me,
Then what recourse do I have, O Lord – what would I do?
O Allah! Those drowned in (Your) love remain awake all night,
Entreating (You) and supplicating, while the unmindful slumber.
O Allah! Here are creatures, most of whom are asleep,
But the mindful use their nights to supplicate to You,
But all of them hope for Your favours, and remain hopeful
Of Your infinite Mercy, and of a Heaven eternal.
O Allah! My hopes have allowed me to desire amnesty,
While the ugliness of my sins has held me back.
O Allah! So if You forgive me, Your pardon will save me,
Else I will be destroyed by my devastating misdeeds.
O Allah! For the sake of the Hashimite Muhammad,

and the sacredness of the purified (ones) who humble themselves before You.

O Allah! For the sake of Mustafa and his cousin,

And the sanctity of the virtuous (ones) who truly submit to You

O Allah! Resurrect me as a follower of the religion of Ahmad,

And as a repentant, devout, obedient, and humble (servant) to You

And do not deny me, O my Allah, O my Master,

His noble intercession, for he is the (perfect) mediator,

And bless him whenever a monotheist calls upon You,

And whenever the righteous bow at Your door, beseeching You.[1]

10. Literature in Imam's (as) wordings

Till now we have read about the wordings of Imam 'Ali (as), which have been written in black and white in the form of poetry and prose in his books such as Nahjul Balagha and other ones. We also came to know the greatness and eloquence of his knowledge, which he mentioned in his sermons, letters, wordings, aphorisms and poems.[2]

As the great people of literature have already said, if we also say that the greatest masterpiece of history of the world from every dimension, such as pertaining to art, deep meaning and great thought, is what was written by Imam 'Ali (as), of course we have said nothing wrong.

Here we are mentioning some parts of the literature in the poetry books said to be related to Imam 'Ali (as) on various topics. Some of the historians have praised them and benefited from their literal peaks. Imam mourning for his father says:

O AbuTalib, the saver for who seeks your refuge and the light in the dark

Your loss has affected the people of the Qur'an, God has granted your prayers.Your God has granted you his blessing as you were the best uncle for the prophet al-Mustafa.

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1. **Al-Sahifah al-'alawiah wa Mafatih al-Jinan.**
2. **Tarikh al-Adab al-Arabi fi Dawa al-manhaj al-Islami**.

According to Jahidh and Bulatheri, Imam 'Ali (as) knew the techniques of poetry more than others; he was also superior to all the people in oration. The epic which he delivered on the day of battle of Badr can be named as proof of this, in which he said:

'We have supported the Prophet of Allah when everybody had let him down,

The Wise Muslims have sought refuge in him,

We have fought those who have gone astray due to being noble to defend ourselves,

As they could not realize the truth of his teaching, nor his divine light,

Once he has received the Divine light and truth, so followed on his steps,

To obey the Divine Merciful, Truth in order to achieve purity.'

Sibt Jozi mentioned the following verses in his book Tazkiratal Khawas and related them to Imam 'Ali (as):

The people are keen on their living wage and its peace mixed with difficulty,

Their livelihood is notby way of their intellect, but God gives it by allocations,

If it was by force, then the big bird wouldfly with the small birds' sustenance.

The following lines are also believed to be the Imam's (as) too:

Your sickness is within you, though you do not realize,

And your cure is within, yet you do not see,

You claim that you are nothing but a tiny entity,

Yet wrapped up inside of you is the greatest universe,

You are the clear book, through whose letters,

All that is secret is revealed and made known,

So you have no need for anything outside of you,

Your consciousness is within you, though you do not know.

O great father of Hassan and Hussain (as); O leader ofpoets and eloquent people, (as), on the day when you opened your eyes as a child, on the day when you showed your faith in Allah and fought

in His way and on the day when you tolerated the difficulties, on the day when you were martyred and on the day when you will rise once again and will meet your partisans near the Pond of Kawsar and the gardens full of heavenly fruits and there you will guide them.

All praise belongs to Allah; the Lord of the worlds.

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7. Sunan ibn Majah, abu abdullah Mohammad bin yazid al-Qazwini, Ibn Majah, Dar al-Fikr, Beirut.

8. Sunan Abi Dawood, by Sulaiman bin Al-Ash'ath al-Sajistani, who died (275 AH).

9. Sunan al-Darami, Abdullah bin Bahram al-Darami,who died (255H.), Dimashiq.

10. Sirat A'alam al-Nubala', by Abi Abdullah Muhammad bin Ahmad Al-Thahabi, who died (748 AH), 9th edition (1413 AH), Mo'asasat Al-Risalah.

11. Sirah Al-Aaimah al-Ithnai Ashar, Al-Sayid Hashim Ma'arofal-Hasani, who died (1404H.)

12. Al-sirah al-Nabawiah, Ibn Hisham al-Himiari, Maktabat Mohammad Ali sobah, Ejypt.

13. Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah, by Abiamid Hibat-Allah bin Muhammad bin Muhammad bin al-ussain bin al-Hadid al-Mada'ini al-M'atazali, who died (656H.). Dar 'Ihia al-kutub al-'Ar abia, Beirut, first edition (1378H.).

14. Sharh al-Akhbar fi Fadail al-Aimah al-Athar, al-Qadhi al-Nu'aman bin Mohammad al-Maqaribi who died (363H.)

15. Sharh Miat Kalimah li Amir al-Mouminin (as), al-sheihk Kamil al-Din Maitham bin Ali al-Bahrani, Jami'at al-Modarisain 1st edition, Qum.

16. Shawahid al-Tanzil li-Qawad al-Tafdil, Abdullah bin Ahmad al-Hanafi al-Nisabouri(al-Hakim al-Hasakani), Mouasasat al-Tabi'a wa al-Nashir 6th edition, Iran.

17. Sharh al-Jam'a al-saghir, Jalal al-Din al-sayoti, who died (911H.).

18. Sheikh al-Madirah, al-Skeikh Mahmood abu raih al-Masri, who died (1390H.)

19. Sharh al-Mowahib al-Ladoniah bil minah al-Muhamadiah, Ahmad bin Mohammad al-Qastalani, who died (923H.)

20. Al-Sirat al-Mustaqim 'Ila Mostahiqi, by Ali bin Younis al-Nabati al-Biadi al-'Amili, who died (877H.).

21.Sahih al-Bukhari, by Muhammad bin Ismail bin Ibrahim bin al-Maghirah al-Ja'afi al-Bukhari, who died (256H.), Dar al-fikr.

22. Sahih Muslim, by Muslim binajjaj al-Qushaiar al-Nisaburi, who died (361H.). Dar Al-fikr, Beirut.

23. Al-Sawa'aq al-Muhriqah, ibn Abi Hajar al-Hithami al-Maki, who died (974H.), Maktabat al-Qahira.

24. Al- Sahiffah al-Alawiah, Abdullah bin Salih al-Hajjum'ah al-Samahiji, who died (1135H.)

T

1. Tarikh al-Tabari (Tarikh al-Umam wal Moluk), by Abi Ja’afar Muhammad bin Jarir al-Tabari (310 AH), Mo’asasat al-‘Alami-Beirut (1403 AH).

2. Al-Tarikh al-Kabir, Mohammad, Mohammad bin Ismail bin Ibrahim bin al-Maghirah al-J'afi al-Bukhari, who died (256H.).

3. Al-Tibian fi Tafsir al-Qur'an, abu Ja'affar Mohammad bin al-Hassan Al-Tousi, who died (460H.)

4. Tarikh ibn Ma'an, uthman bin S'aid al-Darami, who died(280H.)

5. Tarikh al- Adab fi Dhau’i al-Minhaj al-Islami, by Dr. Mahmmud al-Bustani, (contemporary scholar).

6. Tarikh al-Khulafa’, by Jalal al-Din Abdul-Rahman al-Suyuti, who died (911H.).

7. Tarikh al-Tabari (Tarikh al-Umam wal Moluk), by Abi Ja’afar Muhammad bin Jarir al-Tabari (310 AH), Mo’asasat al-‘Alami-Beirut (1403 AH).

8. Tarikh al-Ya’qubi, by Ahmad bin Ya’qub bin Ja’afar bin Wahab bin Wadieh al-ya'qubi, who died (284 AH). Dar Sadir, Beirut.

9. Tarikh Dimashq, by Abu al-Qasim Ali bin al-assan bin Hibat-Allah al-Shafi’e, who is known as ibn ‘Asakir. He died on (571 AH), Dar al-fikr first edition, Beirut.

10. Tarikhal-Madinah al-Mounawarah, Abi -Zaid Umar bin Shibah al-Nomari, who died (262H.). Dar Al- Fikr first edition, Beirut.

11. TarikhBaghadad, abo Bakir Ahmad bin Ali Al-Khatib, who died (463H.), Dar al-Kutob al- 'Almiah,Beirut.

12. Tarikhabi al-Fidaa, abu Ismail bin Ali, who died, (732H.).

13. Tuhaf al-‘Uqul, by Abi Muhammad al-assan bin 'Ali bin al-Hussan bin Shu’abah al-Harani, Mo’asasat al-Nashir, second edition (1404 AH).

14. Tathkirt al-Khawas, by Abi al-Mudhafar Yusuif bin Qazawighli bin Abdullah Sebt ibn al-Jawzi, who died (654 AH).

15. Al-Tafsir al-Kabir (tafsir al-Razi), Mohammad bin Umar bin al-Hussain al-Qarashi al-Tabaristani, who died (606H.).

16. Tafsir al-Baghawi (ma'alim al-Tanzil), abu Ahmad al-Hussain bin Masoud al-Faraaal-Baghwi al-Shafi'ai, who died (516H.).

17. Tafsir Ibn Arabi, Ibn Arabi Mohyi al-Din Mohammad bin Ali al-Tai al-Andalousi, who died (628H.), first edition, Beirut.

18. Tafsir Ibn Kathir, Ibn Kathir, who died (774H.), Dar al-Ma'arifah, Beirut.

19. Tafsir al-Biydawi, Al-Qadi Abdullah bin Umar Mohammad bin Ali Al-Biydawi, who died (791H.), Dar al-fikr, Beirut.

20. Tafsir al-'Ayashi, Abi Nadhir Muhammad bin Masoud bin 'Ayash al-Salami al-Samarqandi, who died (320 AH) al-Maktabah al-'Alamiah al-'Islamiah, Tehran.

21. Tafsir al-Tha'alabi, abu Ishaq Ahmad al-Thalabi, who died (427 or437H.), Dar Ihiaa al-Tourath al-Arabi, 1st edition, Beirut.

22. Tafsir al-Qurtobi, abu Abdullah Mohammad bin Ahmad al-Ansari al-Qurtobi, who died (671H.). Dar Ihiaa al-Tourath al-Arabi, Beirut.

23. Tafsir al-Muhit (Bahir al-Muhit), abu Haian al-Andalusi, who died (745H.), Dar al-Kutob al-'Almiah,Beirut.

24. Tafsir Fourat al-Kufi, abu al-Qasim Fourat bin Ibrahim al-kufi, who died (352H.), Mouasasat al-Tabi'a wa al-nashir, Tehran.

25. Tahthib al-Kamal fi Asmaa al-Rijal, Jamal al-Din bin al-Hajaj bin Yusuf al-Mazi, who died (742H.), Moasasat al-Risalah 4th edition, Beirut.

26. Al-Thaqib fi al-Manaqib, abu Ja'affar Mohammad binAli bin Hamzah al-Tusi, who died (560H.), Mouasasat al-Nashir al-Islamiah, Qum.

27. Al-Thuqat, Mohammad bin Haban bin Ahmad al-Tamimi al-Basti, who died (354H.).

U

1. Usoul al-kafi, Abu Jaffar Mohammad bin Y'aqub al-Kulani, died (328 or 32TH.).

2. Al-'Uthmaiah, abu Uthman Umro bin Bahar bin Mahboub bin fazarah al-Katani, (al-Jahidh), who died (255H.), Maktabat al-Jahidh, Egypt.

3. Al-'Udad al-Qawiah lidafi'a al-Makhawif al-Yawmiah, Radi al-Din Ali bin Yusuf al-Mutahar al-Hilli, who died (726H.).

4. Al-'Umdah, Yahia bin al-Hassan al-Asadi al-Hilli ibn al-Batriq, who died (600H.).

5. 'Uyun Akhbar al-Ridh (as), Abu Ja'affar Mohammad bin Ali al-Saduq, who died (381H.).

6. 'Uyun al-Athar fi fonon al-Maghazi wa alshamail wa Sair, ibn Sayid al-Nas Mohammad bin al-Fatih, who died, (734H.).